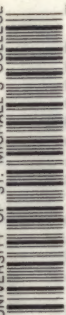
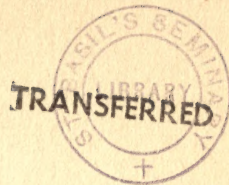


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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IS SCHISM LAWFUL?

A STUDY IN PRIMITIVE ECCLESIOLOGY
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE
QUESTION OF SCHISM

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JOANNES WATERS,

CENSOR THEOL. DEPUT.

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IS SCHISM LAWFUL?

A STUDY IN PRIMITIVE ECCLESIOLOGY
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE
QUESTION OF SCHISM

Presented to the Theological Faculty of St. Patrick's
College, Maynooth, as a Thesis for
the Degree of Doctor

BY

REV. EDWARD MAGUIRE

Dunboyne Establishment, Maynooth College

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PREFACE

IN compiling this work I have derived much assistance from the French historians: Batiffol, Duchesne, and Tixeront. My indebtedness to other authors and publications will be found acknowledged in the notes.

I must cordially thank Dr. Cleary for his kindness in reading the entire work for the press.

E. M.

DUNBOYNE ESTABLISHMENT,
MAYNOOTH COLLEGE,
April, 1915.

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INTRODUCTION

A WAR-CIRCULAR recently issued by His Majesty's Government to the oversea dominions lays stress on "the fundamental unity of the Empire amidst all its diversity of situation and circumstances." It is an acknowledged fact; our scattered possessions cohere in some way. British citizens the world over constitute a rounded whole. They are members of a single association which is quite distinct and separate from corresponding associations of aliens. The Empire is *a social unit*.

Analysing the concept of a society, we find that it contains three elements. To begin with, there is the aggregate of individuals incorporated by visible initiation. Recruits become soldiers by going through certain external formalities; aliens become British citizens by a certificate of naturalization. A member of a society ceases to be such only when the act of initiation by which he was incorporated is nullified.

Every society has its proper end or purpose. Men form associations to attain by joint-action some object which is difficult or impossible of attainment by solitary effort. The State has for its end the promotion of the common good; and, in these times of stress, the reader does not require to be told of the purpose and utility of armies.

Principle of Social Unity.—The third and most

important element in a society is *authority*. Herein we discover *the primary principle of social unity*. A multitude is one because the individual units which make it up are juxtaposed in space ; a school of thought is one because its members stand by common principles. But, in a society, the cohesive element is something more effective and enduring. Here members hold together through the medium of external rule, which directs and controls their activity in view of the common end. No society can exist as such without a ruling authority. This is true of even an anarchist club.

British journalists now speak of Alsace and Lorraine as provinces which were "torn from the bleeding side of France." The imagery is singularly appropriate ; a State bears a close analogy to the living body.

A lion unwarily treading the jungle finds himself suddenly in the hunter's net. Instantly the teeth are bared, the eyes flash fire, and every nerve and sinew is strained. The whole animal is roused and his members unite in a joint-struggle for liberty. The net has to contend not with a group of members acting separately, but with an organization. Injury to any one is the concern of all.

A limb succeeds in extricating itself, and immediately sets to work to release its fellows. Be it noted, however, that its intervention is not quite disinterested. It rescues others simply because it stands to lose by injury to them. In

any organism the well-being of each member, as such, is conditioned by the well-being of its fellow-members and of the whole.

The joint-action here is perfectly ordered ; control is by the vital principle. When the body is attacked or menaced afferent nerves flash the intelligence to head-quarters. The brain at once grapples with the situation, so to speak, and by means of efferent nerves communicates with all the members, calling upon each to do its part towards safeguarding the whole. If the organism is healthy, the response to the call is immediate and general.

So in the State. A short time ago the German ambassador at London was handed his passports. The British Empire felt menaced, and the Head called upon the members to do their duty. The response was general. Roused to action by the recognition of a common danger, the colonies flocked to the Imperial colours ; and Canadians, Australians, Indians, and Africanders made their way to the battlefields of Europe, where they now fight shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-subjects from these islands. Each member feels that to defend the whole is to defend himself.

Hence such terms as "body," "corporate whole," "organization," "organic unit," &c., applied to a society, are as appropriate as they are suggestive. For, as the living body is an organization energized by a vital principle which secures the well-being of the whole by ordering the activity

of the members, so a society is an association of human beings controlled by an external authority in view of a common end. Government is to a society what the vital principle is to the body ; it is *the primary bond of organic solidarity*. The Empire is one, because it has a single central authority to which British citizens everywhere are subject.

Subjects.—Membership in the State, as in any society, since citizens are bound to promote the common good, imposes certain obligations. These obligations they fulfil by obeying the Head.

But who, it will be asked, are bound to obey the Head—to observe, say, the laws of the British Empire? The question looks simple, and many will be inclined to answer at once that British subjects without exception, and these only, are so bound. But let us reflect a little: what of the Belgian refugees?

As we understand the virtue of obedience, it is capable of being exercised only by members towards their Head ; it is only subjects who obey. Resident aliens do not, and cannot, owe obedience to the British Sovereign as such. We note that it is only on naturalization an alien is required to take the oath of allegiance.

True, the Belgian refugees, while resident amongst us, observe the laws of the Realm apparently after the manner of subjects, and are bound to do so. But the obligation in their case is not one of obedience properly so-called ; it arises altogether out of an implied contract. On admission to the

country, they tacitly undertake to observe certain regulations in return for the protection they are about to receive ; and hence, though guilty of breach of contract and liable to the usual penalties if they fail to observe the laws which the central authority has laid down for their guidance, they are not guilty of disobedience. In character their offence is analogous to that of a railway-passenger who smokes in a non-smoking compartment.

It is only members, then, who are, or can be, bound to obey the Head ; and, conversely, a ruler can exact obedience only from his subjects. Any one who is bound to obey the Head is thereby shown to be a member. *Actual subjection to the ruling authority in any society is a formal test of membership in the same.*

Forfeiture of Rights.—A British subject, while retaining his membership in the State, may forfeit his rights as a citizen partially and even totally. Generally speaking the forfeiture is only partial ; as happens, for instance, in the case of imprisonment, which restricts an offender's personal liberty. Where the forfeiture is total, the punishment is known as *outlawry*. It is important to note that even outlaws are members of the State. They have no rights ; and yet remain bound in obedience towards the Head.

Symbols of Authority.—The flag is a recognized symbol of sovereign authority. Every independent State has its distinctive banner ; and hence when a province or colony effectively secedes, it sets up

at once a new flag. Change of flag symbolizes change of sovereignty. When a victorious general makes his formal entry into a conquered city, one of his first acts is to replace the standard of the vanquished Power. Christian De Wet on a recent occasion announced that he would pull down the Union Jack at Pretoria and proclaim an independent South African Republic.

The keys also were in olden times a recognized symbol of government. When a free city fell to a besieging force, the keys of the gates were formally delivered to the conqueror, who was thus symbolically invested with supreme jurisdiction over the persons and property of the vanquished. The key as a symbol of control is still recognized at law. A tenant or purchaser, for example, is held to obtain control of a house or premises at and through delivery of the key.

What divides a Society?—If the primary principle of unity in every society is the supreme social authority, it follows that a radical division can take place only by repudiation of the flag. When a portion of any kingdom makes good a secession, then and only then is the social unity essentially disrupted.

Let me illustrate this important principle by a few concrete examples. A number of British subjects, let us suppose, not only disobey a certain law, but form a league and pledge themselves to resist by force of arms. The Ulster Unionists at one time announced their intention of adopting

some such course in the event of the Home Rule Bill becoming law. Here there is question of armed resistance to recognized authority. It is not proposed to divide the Empire by setting up a new flag—*nec nominetur* ; the recalcitrants acknowledge the Head and merely repudiate its mandate.

Even civil war leaves the social unity essentially intact. By civil war I mean war between two or more portions of a State, each contending for mastery of the whole and each claiming the flag. The bloody and protracted struggle between the Houses of York and Lancaster during the Wars of the Roses was a struggle for the same crown. Neither party contemplated a disruption of the kingdom ; they recognized a common flag and merely disputed as to who should hold it.

Not so the American War of Independence. Here it was a clear case of a *radical breach*. The Representatives of the seceders in Congress assembled proclaimed that “the United Colonies are of right and ought to be Free and Independent States.” Hence with the Peace of 1782, by which Britain acknowledged without reserve the independence of the separated colonies, a new Power was recognized, and a new sovereignty was symbolized by a new flag. The Boer movement, which is just now engaging the attention of the British Government in South Africa, is similar in character.

A society, then, is radically divided only when a section of its members repudiate the flag. In the State, armed resistance to the Head disturbs but

does not quite disrupt. The same is true of revolution and of civil war, if these be understood as armed movements which have for their ultimate object a mere change in the form or personnel of the existing government. *No movement which stops short of secession is radically separative.* One flag one society ; and there will be as many societies as there are flags.

Secession Sometimes Lawful.—It is recognized that, in certain circumstances, secession may be legitimate. In this respect, we fancy, the State bears some analogy to the household. The latter, too, is a society controlled by the domestic Head. During the period of adolescence, children remain members and are bound to obey the parental authority. But when a child has grown to man's estate, we know that he is at liberty to "leave father and mother," and to found an independent home. His parents may withhold their sanction ; they may even use force to restrain him. It matters not ; he acts within his strict rights, and hence is free to override their opposition. If necessary, he may even meet force with force. The breach effected, he ceases to owe them obedience ; by setting up a new authority he has validly and lawfully repudiated the old.

So it is in the State. Colonies have their period of infancy and adolescence ; they have, or they ought to have their period of manhood as well. When they become capable of independent self-control—sufficiently strong to engage in the

struggle for existence, and to grapple single-handed with rivals and opponents—the law of nature gives them, in certain circumstances, a right to “leave father and mother” and to set up a new flag.

When secession is legitimate it should be effected peaceably. In our own time Norway cut itself adrift from Sweden without striking a blow. Generally, however, a breach, even when perfectly legitimate, entails a conflict with the repudiated authority. In such cases it is lawful for the seceders to organize themselves in military fashion and make good their cause by force of arms.

Field of Inquiry.—The reader is now in a position to understand in a general way the scope of a work which professes to be a study in primitive ecclesiology, with special reference to the question of schism. We shall begin with an examination of historical Christianity. We shall ask ourselves if the glad-tiding which was announced for the first time in Palestine, some two thousand years ago, was *only a tiding*. Did those who received the new message, in the first instance, constitute a mere school, or did they form societies; and if they formed societies did these take shape as isolated and autonomous units or was there an all-round federation, a society of all societies, a church of all the churches?

Having satisfied ourselves as to the character of the new ‘tendency,’ as it actually realized itself in the world, we shall proceed in the second place to

inquire into its antecedents. Many modern critics who grant that historical Christianity was social, deny that it was such *de iure*. Ecclesiasticism, they tell us, finds no place in the personal teaching of Jesus. We shall see if this novel contention can be sustained.

The ecclesiology of the Ante-nicene period will engage our attention in the succeeding chapters. Taking as our sources of information the extant literature of the first three centuries, we shall try to determine the views of the early Christian writers on the nature and constitution of the Church.

Should we find that the Christianity of the New Testament and the Fathers is a single external society, we shall devote a concluding chapter to the development of an analogy between the Church of Christ and the British Empire. Membership in the State is acquired by birth as well as by naturalization; and is relinquished not only by death, but by expatriation and by successful rebellion. Is the same true—*mutatis mutandis*—of membership in the Church? In fine, secession from the civil society is sometimes legitimate. Is the same true of the ecclesiastical society?—is schism lawful? *For schism is simply secession from the Church.*

CHAPTER I

THE NEW DISPERSION

JERUSALEM was the birth-place of the Christian Church. It was the morning of Pentecost 29 A.D. A group of Galilean fishermen, led by one Simon Peter, suddenly began to proclaim in the city that in Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and risen, they had found the Messiah.¹ In Him alone was salvation. To be saved one should do penance, accept certain truths proposed by the new preachers, and submit to a peculiar form of washing known as "*baptism*." Following a sermon to this effect delivered by Simon, a digest of which has come down to us,² some three thousand souls "*believed*."³

THE LOCAL CHURCH

Christianity Social.—The new religion was congregational from the first; the earliest converts held together. To a man they rallied to Simon Peter and his companions and *formed a community*.⁴ New converts were admitted to membership as they were made. "*All that believed were together,*

¹ Ac. ii. 14 *sqq.*

² *ib.*

³ *ib.* v. 41.

⁴ *κοινωνία*, *ib.* v. 42.

and had all things common . . . and the Lord *added to them* daily those that were being saved.”¹

For a time all went well. Despite bitter opposition from priests, Sadducees and others, the community of the fishermen grew apace. The Lord increased them² . . . and men magnified them.³ But their hour was to come. A violent persecution, originating in the trial and martyrdom of St. Stephen, forced the entire community to fly the mother-city, the apostles alone remaining.⁴ With indomitable fortitude the fugitives made their way through the districts of Judea and Samaria, preaching the “gospel”⁵ as they went and converting many.⁶ Organized to extinguish it utterly, the persecution was, in effect, a means of spreading the New Light.

From the very outset external fellowship characterized the followers of Jesus, wherever or by whomsoever converted. This is history. Christian communities came into being wherever the gospel was preached. A community established at Antioch by the fugitives from Jerusalem we find figuring conspicuously in the early stages of the Christian development. Paul, an emissary of the

¹ Ac. v. 47 (R. V.).

³ Ac. v. 13.

² *ib.* ii. 47.

⁴ *ib.* viii. 1.

⁵ A. Sax. *Godspell*—*God* (good) and *spell* (tidings); Gr. *εὐαγγέλιον*, the name given to the doctrinal basis of the new religion.

⁶ Ac. viii. 4.

community at Antioch set up local associations wherever he preached. These he named "*churches*." The establishment of *one* "church" for the residents of each city or district¹ he regarded as the sole purpose of his mission to them. This end attained, he commended his new converts to the Lord and at once betook himself to fresh fields.² Into the existing local church all those subsequently converted in the district were incorporated as a matter of course. "Unattached" brethren were unheard of.³

The local community an external society.—The local community was an organic unit. It was a church.⁴ The brethren in each district formed a well-defined and exclusive association to which

¹ No city or district however large had more than one church. In this Christianity contrasted with Judaism which admitted several distinct synagogues in a large city or area. By "churches" and "synagogues" the reader will understand here not buildings, or places of meeting, but Christian and Jewish associations respectively.

² Ac. xiv. 23.

³ Harnack emphasizes this historical fact. (*What is Christianity?* pp. 102-3, 155 sqq.)

⁴ The English word "church" primarily signifies a sacred building [Gr. τὸ κυριακόν—"the Lord's house," Sc. *kirk*, O.E. *chirche*, A. Sax. *circe* (c's hard), Dan. *kirke*, G. *Kirche*.]. In a secondary or transferred sense it represents the ἐκκλησία of the New Testament.

To a Greek the ἐκκλησία was "an assembly of the citizens summoned by crier, the legislative assembly" (Lidd. and S.), ruled by elected office-bearers. To a Jew it had been the community of the elect (Hebr. qāhāl)—the chosen

only 'the saved'¹ "were added."² "All who believed were together; . . . but of the rest no man durst join himself unto them."³ Non-members were "outsiders"—οἱ ἔξω, the brethren being referred to as οἱ ἑσω—"the initiated."⁴ The penitent Saul returning from Damascus to Jerusalem experienced some difficulty in having himself "*joined to the disciples.*"⁵ The new fellowship was a *visible society*.

Members were capable of effective cooperation. We find them combining, at one time to have doctrinal differences authoritatively adjusted,⁶ at another to relieve the indigent,⁷ again to establish and maintain by subscriptions a permanent local fund.⁸ The community as such despatched and received letters and emissaries. It was capable of

people. To Greeks and Jews alike the word connoted visible organic unity.

In the New Testament ἐκκλησία (singular) has a variety of applications. It denotes :

- (a) The local church (Ac. xi. 22, 26; xii. 1-5; xiii. 1; xiv. 27; xv. 4; xx. 7; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 2; vi. 4; 2 Cor. i. 1; Rom. xvi. 1, 23, etc.).
 - (b) The actual assemblage of the local church (Ac. xv. 22; 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 19, 34-5; xi. 18; 3 John v. 6).
 - (c) The "house"—church: (1 Cor. xvi. 19; Rom. xvi. 5).
 - (d) The sum-total of the churches of several districts (Ac. ix. 31)
 - (e) The Church Universal (Col. i. 18-24; Eph. i. 22; iii. 10, 21; v. 23-5 *sqq.* Gal. i. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 19).
- ¹ Ac. ii. 47. ⁴ *cfr.* 1 Cor. v. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 7.
² *ib.* vv. 41-44. ⁵ Ac. ix. 26.
³ *ib.* v. 44, v. 13. ⁶ *ib.* xv.
⁷ *ib.* xi. 29, 30. ⁸ Philipp. iv. 15, 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

rigorously boycotting the pagan law-courts.¹ Its members came together at an appointed time and place to "break bread."² In all this we discover effective cooperation and joint-action of a kind which is possible only on the basis of external organization.

We already know the marks of a society.³ The local church had a visible rite of initiation. The procedure of Philip in converting the eunuch may be taken as typical. The eunuch seated in his chariot, was reading a passage from Isaias when Philip came up: Whereupon "Philip, opening his mouth and beginning at this Scripture, preached unto him Jesus." The eunuch, becoming convinced, expressed a desire for baptism. "And Philip said: 'If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest.' And he answering said: 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' Then they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."⁴ Acceptance of certain doctrines is demanded as *a condition for baptism*. Philip said: "*If thou believest thou mayest.*" Nothing could be clearer. Baptism makes the Christian. Faith is a condition for baptism.

Men "repent and believe the gospel" for a

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 1 *sqq.*

² One fixed day each week. 1 Cor. xvi. 2, *cfr. ib.* x. 16; xi. 18-20, Ac. ii. 7.

³ *v. supra*, Introd.

⁴ Ac. viii. 35-38.

common purpose. They become Christians to save themselves. Peter's first sermon in the streets of Jerusalem made this clear: "Repent and be baptized" he said, "every one of you. . . . Save yourselves from this perverse generation."¹ 'Salvation through Jesus' was the watchword of the early Christian missionary. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" said Paul to the jailor at Philippi "and thou shalt be saved."² To reject 'the word' was to perish. When Silas and Timothy arrived at Corinth from Macedonia they found Paul "earnest in preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But, they gain-saying and blaspheming, he shook his garments and said to them: *Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean.*"³

Lastly, in each local community there was a ruling authority. Let us just glance at the evidence. To begin with, we note the fact that unworthy aspirants were denied admission to the Christian fellowship,⁴ while disgraceful or refractory members were excommunicated.⁵ Herein we recognize an exercise of that authority which vests in every social unit however rudimentary its organization, whereby it can determine effectively who are, and who are not, to be accounted its members.

In every church there existed from the beginning a select body who taught with authority and ruled the entire community. The mother-church at

¹ Ac. ii. 38-40.

² *ib.* xvi. 31.

³ *ib.* xviii. 5, 6.

⁴ *ib.* viii. 37; ix. 26.

⁵ 1 Cor. v. 5.

Jerusalem was at first shepherded by the apostles. By them aspirants to membership were admitted or excluded.¹ They took charge of, and administered the common purse;² and when the Greeks complained that their widows were being treated unfairly in the daily ministration, the apostles had seven deacons elected whom *they appointed* "to serve the tables."³

In the mother-church at a somewhat later period,⁴ and in every Christian community outside Jerusalem from the first, there existed a body of ecclesiastical superiors who were known as "elders" or "overseers."⁵ These were appointed

¹ *cfr.* Ac. ix. 27.

² *ib.* iv. 37.

³ And yet we find the ablest Protestant apologists contending that the mother-church at Jerusalem had a democratic form of government, and acted on the conviction that the authority bestowed by Christ on His Church belonged to the whole congregation and not to an apostolic hierarchy. "The Apostles," we are told, "might suggest, but the congregation ruled." (Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, p. 32.) One is positively at a loss to understand how any intelligent student of the Acts can defend this position "with perfect honesty of heart and of head" (*cfr.* Ac. vi. 1-6).

⁴ *ib.* xv. 4.

⁵ The titles *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπίσκοπος* are apparently synonymous in the New Testament (*cfr.* Ac. xx. 17-28). The further question as to whether all superiors so named were of equal standing does not concern us.

Ecclesiastical superiors have other titles. The encyclical "to the Ephesians" speaks of "*ποιμένες καὶ διδασκάλοι*," while in the epistles to the Hebrews and to the Romans superiors are entitled *οἱ ἡγούμενοι* and *οἱ προϊστάμενοι* respectively. (Eph. iv. 11; Hebr. xiii 7, 17; Rom. viii. 8; *cfr.* 1 Thess. v. 12.)

in each church by the apostles themselves or by their delegates or successors.¹ When Paul and Barnabas had preached 'the word' at Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, and had made many converts, "they appointed² to them elders in every church."³ Titus is instructed to set up⁴ elders in every church in Crete;⁵ and Timothy receives a like commission for Ephesus.⁶

¹ Ecclesiastical superiors were not *appointed* by the faithful. Scriptural passages which have been cited to prove that they were, merely show that the local elders were sometimes *elected* by the faithful; and this is not denied. The same passages make it perfectly clear that the elders even when elected by the faithful were invariably *ordained* by the apostles or by their delegates or successors.

² Gr. χειροτονήσαντες. Advocates of the "popular" theory, including one of the most scholarly of living exegetical critics—Edward Meyer—, contend that the use of the word by St. Luke shows that the elders in question received their appointment by popular election. "Paul and Barnabas *had them elected* to office." The best Greek authorities are agreed, however, that, while its primary meaning was undoubtedly "to elect," the word χειροτονεῖν came afterwards to mean simply "*to appoint*." This is its ordinary meaning in Hellenistic Greek. Josephus *e.g.* uses it of David's elevation to the kingship by God (*cfr.* Dale, *Manual of Congregational Principles*, p. 68).

Hence Batiffol is scarcely accurate when he states, in connection with the ecclesiology of St. Ignatius, that the verb χειροτονεῖν *always* signifies *to elect*. ("Le verbe χειροτονεῖν signifie toujours élire"—*Primitive Catholicism*, Fr. ed., p. 157 n.)

³ Ac. xiv. 23.

⁴ Gr. καταστήσῃς.

⁵ Tit. i. 5.

⁶ *cfr.* 1 Tim. iii. 1 *sqq.*, v. 22.

The extant letters of the other apostles imply that "presbyters" were to be found in every church to which they wrote. Peter addressing "the strangers dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia has a special word to say to 'the elders'";¹ while the Catholic epistle of James instructs "the infirm" to have themselves anointed by "the elders of the Church."²

It is not difficult to satisfy oneself as to the general nature of the early presbyteral or episcopal office. The elders or overseers were *authoritative teachers and rulers*. They were pastors of the local community. The elders of the church at Ephesus are admonished by Paul to "take heed unto themselves and to all the flock wherein the Holy Ghost had placed them overseers to *shepherd* (ποιμαίνειν) the church of God."³ Peter, similarly, in a passage to which we have already referred, exhorts the elders to *shepherd* (ποιμάνατε) the Christian flock;⁴ while the author of the epistle to the Hebrews insists upon *obedience and subjection* to ecclesiastical superiors.⁵ The elders at Jerusalem we shall find legislating for the entire church in what is usually described as the first general council.⁶

Professor Sohm's theory of church origins is unscriptural. For him the church is essentially an

¹ 1 Pet. v. 1, 2.

² James v. 14.

³ Ac. xx. 28.

⁴ 1 Pet. *loc. cit.*

⁵ Hebr. xiii. 17.

⁶ Ac. xv. 23.

invisible society. The earliest Christian communities, he tells us, were not organized. "Law and the world of spiritual things are diametrically opposed." When the brethren came together "for the word" or "to break bread," the assembly was "ruled" by outpourings of the Spirit,—those charismata which figure so prominently in the history of primitive Christianity. From this pneumatic or charismatic anarchy—describe it how you will—was gradually evolved a stable hierarchy.¹

The theory cannot stand ; it fails to take account of the facts. Harnack examines it closely, but only to set it aside as being utterly unhistorical. There existed in each church, from the very outset, a stable hierarchy which authoritatively taught and ruled the community. This hierarchy controlled even the exercise of charisms.²

Harnack, it is worthy of note, lays stress on the fact that the historical church was born organic,³ though he contends that such was the case only *de facto* and not *de iure*. Christ, he says, never intended that His followers should constitute a society. This theory will come up for examination in its proper place.⁴ Here we merely note how significant it is that a critic of Harnack's undoubted

¹ *cfr.* Harnack : *What is Christianity?* p. 110. *Bat. op. cit.*, pp. xvi—xviii, 130, 143 *sqq.*

² *cfr.* 1 Cor. xiv. 6–36.

³ *cfr.* *What is Christianity?* p. 155.

⁴ ch. iii.

acumen should concede that the infant church took shape *from the first*¹ as a community of Christ's *immediate* disciples,² even though he refuses to admit that it did so as the result of a mandate emanating from the Master.

THE CHURCH AND THE SYNAGOGUE

In Christianity Judaism finds its fulfilment, its realization. Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and risen is "the expected of nations"; His Church is the messianic kingdom. Such was the form in which "the glad-tiding" was announced by the new preachers to the seed of Abraham.

Historically the Church of Christ was born of the synagogue. The broad facts are well known. Setting out to evangelize the world the early missionaries found themselves confronted with a vast empire which had been planted with synagogues.³ They would plant it with Christian churches.

The mode of procedure was uniform and intelligible. The children would first be filled, the dogs subsequently.⁴ The Jews, Hellenistic no less than

¹ "The disciples *at once* formed themselves into a community" (*What is Christianity? ib.*).

² "The band of pupils, . . . men in whose ears every word of their master's was still ringing" (*ib.*, pp. 155, 182).

³ Jewish colonies were to be found in every city of the Hellenic world at the dawn of Christianity (*cfr. Bat. op. cit.*, pp. 1-16; Duchesne: *Christian Worship*, pp. 1-6. Harnack: *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, vol. i, pp. 1-23).

⁴ Mk. vii. 27.

Palestinian, were a privileged race. They were God's own people, and as such were entitled to preferential treatment. We are, therefore, prepared to find that the apostles, arriving in a district or city, invariably began their missionary work by evangelizing the Jewish colony. Everywhere throughout the Empire Christianity made its first appearance in the synagogues, and the earliest converts at each centre were without exception "of the circumcision."¹ It was only when the local synagogue had been, with whatever success, evangelized, that the Christian missionary considered himself at liberty to address the uncircumcised. At Pisidian Antioch, for example, Paul began with the Jews. "And when they, filled with envy, contradicted his teaching, then he said boldly: to you it behoved us first to speak the word of God; but because you reject it . . . behold we turn to the Gentiles."² At Corinth, too, he began by testifying to the Jews; but, they gainsaying, he said to them: Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.³

The local church had its beginnings in a Jewish schism.—Intimate as was the original connection in each district between the Christian community and the synagogue, they formed, from the first, distinct and independent organizations. This is

¹ *cfr.* Ac. xiii. 5.

² *ib.* vv. 45, 46.

³ *ib.* xviii. 6.

certain. The apostles, we have seen, inaugurated their mission at each centre by preaching in the synagogue. In this way a number of the Jews, as a rule, received 'the word,' and for some little time a casual onlooker would have seen in Christianity nothing more serious than a sect within the synagogue.

The Church and the Synagogue independent organizations.—It was, however, something much more serious as the rulers of the synagogue were quick to realize. The new preachers proclaimed the passing of the old dispensation and were treated accordingly. Having taken shape and grown somewhat within the bosom of the synagogue the Christian community were expelled and were thereafter recognized by all as a new and distinct organization. So it happened to the apostles and their disciples at Jerusalem: there was a *radical* division—a schism—in the Jewish society, a section of its members abandoning the old flag for a new. The synagogue looked upon Christians as schismatics.

At no time were the Christian and the Jewish societies one. The local church, it is true, remained and developed, for a little, within the bosom of the synagogue. But from the first moment of its existence it constituted an organism distinct from and independent of its parent. Towards the rulers of the synagogue the Christian authorities assumed from the outset a thoroughly independent attitude. The organizations were professedly antagonistic.

When the rulers of the synagogue at Jerusalem summoned Peter and John and "charged them not to speak nor teach in the name of Jesus,"¹ the apostles ignored the charge. Apprehended subsequently for disobeying orders, they were scourged and again charged "to speak no more in the name of Jesus." . . . "And the apostles," we read, "went from the presence of the council rejoicing, . . . and every day they ceased not, in the temple and from house to house, to teach and to preach Christ Jesus."² They alone, or those appointed by them, controlled the new organization.

We have said that the Church and the synagogue were antagonistic from the first. It could scarcely have been otherwise. The apostles and their emissaries proclaimed a new covenant and the passing of the old. They preached an unexpected fulfilment of messianic prophecy which involved an extinction of Jewish prerogatives. This hard fact was implied in their earliest teaching, however they might try to avoid hurting Jewish sensibilities. His enemies accused St. Stephen of *blasphemy against Moses*. The charge was, of course, false in substance; but from the incident we may infer that the outspoken deacon had been at little pains to gloss over the fact that the Jewish covenant was dead or at least moribund. The terms of the charge are noteworthy: "This man,"

¹ Ac. iv. 18.

² *ib.* v. 40-42.

they alleged, "ceaseth not to speak words against the Holy Place and the Law; for we have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the traditions which Moses delivered unto us." ¹ It is clear that the earliest Christian preachers proclaimed that the Jewish temple with all it stood for had been, by divine arrangement of course, supplanted by the Church of Christ.

The distinctive character of the new society is further apparent from its doctrines and its rites. It had a distinctive doctrinal basis. "The word" was a *new* revelation, a treasury of divine truth entrusted by Christ to His apostles.² The new association had also distinctive rites—the baptismal rite of initiation and the "breaking of bread." Both were new and peculiar to Christians.³

That the Church and the synagogue were independent organizations was generally recognized. In the matter of privileges, for example, a sharp distinction was drawn by the civil authority

¹ Ac. vi. 13, 14.

² 1 Tim. vi. 20.

³ It is of no consequence that the Jews of the dispersion had been baptizing their proselytes. The Jewish baptism was not the Christian. Baptism administered in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost owed its origin to Jesus and was peculiar to the new organization (*cfr.* Bat. *op. cit.*, p. 12; Harnack: *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, vol. i, p. 12).

between Christian and Jew. The synagogue was officially recognized as a lawful association ; and its members were not only immune from persecution but enjoyed many important privileges. The Church on the other hand was for centuries denied state recognition. She was regarded as a pernicious organization, which was somehow subversive of the established order and a menace to the constitution. Unlike members of the synagogue, Christians lived in a state of utter insecurity as to life and property ; and when storm after storm burst upon them during the early centuries, the Jews, as such, were never involved.

In the beginning, however, Christianity and Judaism were undoubtedly confounded. This was to be expected. The divisions caused in the synagogues by the introduction of the new element, were naturally regarded by pagan onlookers as the outcome of doctrinal controversy among Jews themselves. " The Galileans " were thought to be a refractory sect within the synagogue—nothing more. Thus, when the Jews at Corinth arraigned St. Paul before the civil tribunal on a charge of apostasy, the proconsul summarily dismissed the case : " Questions about the Law," he said, " Jews must decide for themselves." He would not act as judge in such matters.¹ We can account similarly for the interesting fact that disturbances which arose in the Roman synagogues in conse-

¹ Ac. xviii. 12-17.

quence of the infiltration of the new teaching resulted in the expulsion of *all Jews* from the city.¹ This was about the year 51. On the other hand, some thirteen years later, on the occasion of the burning of Rome, we find a clear-cut distinction drawn by the civil authorities between Jews and Christians. Thenceforward the distinction was always officially recognized and acted upon.²

Let us now hear the critics who affirm that the Christian Church in its early infancy was neither *de iure* nor *de facto* a society, still less a society distinct from and independent of the synagogue. They call attention to the fact that Gentiles were admitted to the "fellowship of the apostles" only when the Christian development had already reached an advanced stage.³ Until then, Jews alone were deemed eligible for "initiation," and to become "brethren" members of the synagogue had only to do penance and accept the gospel. "Repent and believe" was the simple *dictum* of the early Christian missionary. It had also been the *dictum* of Jesus and of the Precursor. In it we find no suggestion of a new organization. Jesus came merely to reform the synagogue. The establishment of *the Church* was the result of an after-thought on the part of the apostles, when the Jews as a body had rejected the gospel and when it was

¹ Ac. xviii. 2. *cfr.* Sueton: *Vita Claud.* 25.

² *cfr.* Bat. *op. cit.*, pp. 17 *sqq.*

³ Ac. xii,

felt that, after all, Jesus had been deceived as to the proximity of the apocalyptic kingdom.

Such is the theory. This view, it will be observed, deals not alone with the historical church but also with Christianity *de iure*. We examine it here under the former aspect only, reserving the ecclesiology of Jesus for a subsequent chapter.¹

The infant Church, it is alleged, was a mere reform-school within the synagogue. A Jew to become "a brother" had only to mend his ways and accept the new teaching.² Every student of Sacred Scripture knows how utterly inadequate and misleading is this statement of the facts. Repentance and faith were demanded, indeed, but demanded merely *as conditions for baptism*. The external rite of initiation alone, it was, which made the Christian, as is plain from the story of Philip and the eunuch.

That Christianity was ecclesiastical in its beginnings is historically certain. It is also certain, whatever the critics may say, that the Church was from its earliest infancy an organization quite distinct from and independent of the synagogue. The earliest Christians it is true were without exception "of the circumcision," and many, if not all, practised the religion of their fathers for some time after their conversion. Their leaders did so. In addition it would appear that antecedently to

¹ ch. iii.

² "Everyone who acknowledged Jesus as the Lord belonged to the community" (Harnack : *What is Christianity?* p. 167).

the baptism of Cornelius circumcision was deemed an absolute condition for admission to the Christian fellowship.¹ All this may be history, but it is no less history that the apostolic Church was born independent of the synagogue. The sources represent Christians as having acknowledged a new flag from the very outset. The Church had also, as we have seen, distinctive rites and a distinctive doctrinal basis.

THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

The two Dispersions.—Our findings up to the present may be summarized by saying that history represents the Church as having appeared in the

¹ But now arises a difficulty. How, it will be asked, could the apostles have regarded circumcision as a necessary condition for baptism if they understood that the new religion was for all men? This objection must be faced squarely. It is perfectly certain that the immediate disciples had been taught to regard the Church as a world-church. Jesus, as we shall see, proclaimed Himself Saviour, not of a nation, but of the individual, and therefore of all individuals. On the other hand, it seems equally certain that, until Peter was divinely enlightened to the contrary, the entire primitive church, including the apostles, understood that only the circumcised could be initiated. How is the antinomy to be solved? Either, we take it, the apostles considered themselves bound in virtue of their commission to abstain *for some time* from evangelizing the uncircumcised, or, they understood that all men were constrained to enter the Church by way of the synagogue,—that to approach Christ a Gentile should begin by approaching Moses.

Roman Empire in the form of a *dispersion*¹ of *external societies*, distinct from each other, and severally distinct from and independent of the local Jewish communities. The apostles found themselves face to face with a dispersion of synagogues. Alongside and over against each² they set up a rival organization; so that, with the spread of the movement, every city became the birth-place of a new religious society. Historically, then, primitive Christianity resembled contemporary Judaism in being realized in a dispersion of visible associations. With the spread of Christianity the Empire became the home of two antagonistic Diasporas.

The Jewish Dispersion lacked organic unity.—Jews of the Dispersion were bound together by many ties. They formed one nation, one brotherhood. They had community of aspirations, political and religious. All looked forward with eagerness to the coming of a great Messiah who would universalize Yahvism and make the poor despised Israelite lord of the earth. The Jews

¹ *cfr.* 1 Pet. i. 1. Πέτρος . . . ἐκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς Πόντου, Γαλατίας. . . .

² The reader must not infer, however, that every individual synagogue gave birth to a distinct church. In a large city where there existed a number of synagogues the Jews who "fell away" and embraced Christianity were drafted together *into one and the same church*. There was one church (ἐκκλησία), and only one, in each city however large. In this important respect the organization of primitive Christianity contrasted with that found in the synagogue and in the pagan *collegia*.

were adopted children of the same Father, God's own people, an elect race. They revered the same great mediator and lawgiver, Moses, and observed the same ethical and ceremonial codes.

The Holy City with its sanctuary was a further bond of union. Sion was the centre of Yahvism. There stood the only sanctuary on earth wherein sacrifice might be offered to the God of Israel. Jews the world over had thus a common stake in the mother-city. They contributed generously towards the up-keep of her temple¹ and gloried in its splendour, and every Jew however remote his domicile was expected to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, at least once in his life-time.

But the bond of external authority was lacking. This is noteworthy. For Jews of the Dispersion Jerusalem was a Mecca not a Rome. They formed a number of discrete associations which were each self-contained and perfectly autonomous. They were subject to no central government.² They were a racial not an organic unit: a nation without a flag.

The New Dispersion an Organic Unit.—In the earliest stage of the Christian development the brethren were bound together by the tie of a common nationality. Only Jews were admitted to fellowship. With the conversion of Cornelius

¹ cfr. Duchesne : *Christian Worship*, p. 5. Harnack : *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, pp. 14, 15.

² cfr. Duchesne : *loc. cit.* ; Bat. *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 5.

however circumcision ceased to be a condition for baptism. Thenceforward, the doors of the Church were open to all nationalities.

Members of the new Dispersion, like those of the old, constituted a visible fraternity, a league of brothers. Followers of Jesus, wherever resident, were ἀδελφοί.¹ They were adopted children of the same Father, disciples of the same Master. They had a common statutory creed, a common ethical code, a common cult.

But the new Diaspora, unlike the old, was an organic unit. The same missionaries, who set up local churches wherever they preached, subjected the entire Christian Dispersion to a central external authority. Their extant letters speak of a *Church of churches* into which all Christians are baptized "whether Jew or gentile whether bond or free."²

The Acts tell us that, when Stephen was martyred, there arose a great persecution against the Church (ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν) which was in Jerusalem.³ We have already remarked on the important consequences of that outburst. Christian societies, founded by fugitives from the mother-church, came into being, everywhere

¹ "Catholicism" is therefore not exclusively Pauline as modern critics tell us.

² The oneness of Christian baptism suggests but scarcely establishes the organic unity of the Church. The Jewish Dispersion was not a social unit and yet its members had a common form of initiation—circumcision.

³ Ac. viii. 1.

throughout the surrounding districts.¹ These societies were not isolated units. They cohered in some way. St. Luke refers to them *in globo* as “the Church (ἡ ἐκκλησία) throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria.”²

The apostles, who remained in Jerusalem,³ exercised jurisdiction over the dispersed communities. This is now conceded by the ablest critics.⁴ The apostles sent Peter and John to confirm the brethren in Samaria;⁵ and when Greeks received the word at Antioch the mother-church “sent Barnabas to them.”⁶ She approved of their evangelization but implied that the new community was subject to her. Finally Peter visited all the churches in an official capacity, as

¹ Ac. vv. 4 *sqq.*

² *ib.* ix. 31.

³ *ib.* viii. 1.

⁴ *cfr.* Weizsäcker, p. 585; Bat. *op. cit.*, p. 51.

⁵ Ac. viii. 14.

⁶ *ib.* xi. 22 There is reason to believe that those “Greeks” at Antioch were the first *absolute heathens* to be admitted to the Church. The eunuch baptized by Philip was at least a proselyte. Cornelius too may have been a proselyte at least in a wide sense of the term. St. Luke refers to him as having been a “φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν” (Acts x. 2).

Dr. Lindsay states that ‘Peter and John were sent to Samara to *inquire into the conversions* among the Samaritans,’ and that ‘Barnabas was sent down to Antioch on a similar errand.’ (*op. cit.*, p. 24.) This statement of the facts is inadequate and misleading, as the reader may see for himself by comparing it with St. Luke’s narrative which we reproduce.

St. Chrysostom observes ;¹ and as may be inferred from the fact that at Cæsarea he authoritatively flung open the doors of the Church to the uncircumcised.²

This admission of "Greeks" to the Christian fellowship led to a serious dissension among the faithful. When Paul and Barnabas had returned to Antioch at the close of the first of their missionary journeys: "Some coming down from Judea taught the brethren saying: except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses you cannot be saved."³ Baptism, they contended, did not suffice for salvation; the law of circumcision remained in force. This teaching, it should be noted, struck at the very foundations of Christianity. If admitted, it would lower the Church of Christ to the level of a Jewish sect.⁴ Realizing this, "Paul and Barnabas had no small contest with them;" and it would seem as if the faithful took sides, some supporting the apostles, and others declaring for the Judaisers.

The question could not be settled at Antioch. The disputants, St Luke proceeds,⁵ "determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of the

¹ *Hom. 21 in Acta* n. 1, 2.

² *Ac. x. 34, 35.*

³ *ib. xv. 1 sqq.*

⁴ Christians would differ from ordinary Jews only in acknowledging Jesus to be the Christ.

⁵ Harnack, we should note, maintains that what is narrated in Acts xv took place at a somewhat later date.

other side should go up to the apostles and elders to Jerusalem about this question." The Church at Antioch recognized in the authorities at Jerusalem a body empowered to pronounce definitively upon the question at issue. They recognized a central authority whose decision would be binding upon the parties.

What was the sequel? How were "Paul and Barnabas and the others" received at Jerusalem? Did "the apostles and elders" disclaim the standing implicitly attributed them by the disputants? On the contrary, convening a solemn council they formulated and issued a *decree* to bind not alone the Christians at Antioch but the faithful generally.

This is, of course, denied by Congregationalists. "The appeal of the Church at Antioch," writes Dr. Dale . . . "proves nothing against the Independency of apostolic churches. . . . The whole story apart from modern controversies is perfectly simple. . . . The Judaisers appear to have alleged the authority of the Church at Jerusalem for their opinions; ¹ and they were able to maintain with perfect truth that, whatever Paul and Barnabas might teach, the Christians at Jerusalem . . . observed the laws of Moses. . . . If there was real conflict between Paul and Barnabas, on the one side, and the Christians at Jerusalem on the other, it would seem *the safer course* for the recent converts from heathenism at

¹ Ac. xv. 24, 25.

Antioch to adhere to the faith and practice of the older and more powerful church. . . ."

"The way in which it was resolved to settle the question," he proceeds, "was simple and obvious. The Judaisers maintained that the apostles and elders at Jerusalem were on their side. A deputation was sent from Antioch to Jerusalem to learn if this was a fact. It was the apostles and elders *and the whole church*¹ at Jerusalem that considered the question and answered it. . . . Advantage was taken of the discussion *to draw up certain articles of peace . . . to state the terms on which Jewish Christians could live peaceably with Christian converts from heathenism . . .* James had recommended that the Christian gentiles should be *asked* to abstain from things sacrificed to idols. . . ."

Such is "the simple story." We have to inquire how far it squares with St. Luke's narrative and with the text of the decree: To begin with, Dr. Dale is quite mistaken as to the personnel of the "council." The facts are against him. St. Luke relates that the delegates from Antioch *were received by the church and by the apostles and elders. Later the apostles and elders assembled to discuss the question at issue.* The discussion concluded, *the apostles and elders with the whole church selected men to act as bearers of the decree to the church*

¹ Ac. v. 22.

² *op. cit.*, pp. 84 *sqq.* I have tried to give the substance of Dr. Dale's criticism. The italics are my own.

at Antioch. Finally, the decree was formulated and issued in the name of *the apostles and elders*.¹ St. Luke makes it clear, therefore, that, whereas *the church* received the strangers and took part in the election of the delegates to Antioch, it was *the apostles and elders alone*, who formed the council and were responsible for the decree. Dr. Dale speaks of it as a decree emanating "from the apostles and the elders and the whole church;" St. Luke, on the other hand, refers to it as "the decrees of the apostles and the elders"² simply.

The text of the decree is as follows: "The apostles and elders brethren³ to the brethren of the gentiles that are at Antioch and in Syria and Cilicia, greeting. Forasmuch as we have heard that some going out from us have troubled you with words: subverting your souls, to whom we gave no commandment: It hath seemed good to us, being assembled together, to choose out men, and to send them unto you with our well-beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have given their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We

¹ There are two readings: one: "The apostles and elders and brethren to the brethren . . ." the other: "The apostles and elders brethren to the brethren. . . ." The latter is almost certainly the true reading. Dr. Dale admits that "it is supported by high MS. authority" (*op. cit.*, p. 87 n).

² Τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστ. καὶ τῶν πρεσβ. Ac. xvi. 4; *cfr.* xv. 41.

³ *v. supra*, n. 1.

have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves also will by word of mouth tell you the same things. For it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden¹ upon you than these necessary things: That you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled and from fornication; from which things keeping yourselves, you shall do well. Fare ye well.”²

The tone of the communication is quite *authoritative*. The apostles and elders deal with the dissension *effectively*. They are not satisfied with a mere expression of opinion, nor even with a formal statement of their own personal views upon the question at issue. No; the decree of “the apostles and elders” *imposes obligations*. “It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden upon you than . . . that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols. . . .” Dr. Dale speaks of “*safer courses*,” of gentile Christians being “*asked*” to abstain from certain things, of “*articles of peace*” between Jew and Gentile, of a “*statement of the terms*” upon which Jew could associate with Gentile. Over against all this language of “*Independency*” stands the original text of the decree, which speaks of *commands*, and of *an imposition of burdens*.

The document was formally addressed only to

¹ Gr. “μηδὲν πλεον ἐπιτίθεσθαι ὑμῖν βάρος.”

² Ac. xv. 23-25.

the gentile Christians at Antioch and to those of Syria and Cilicia. In reality however the decree was intended as a general law, and was everywhere received as such.¹ Copies were distributed in all the churches.²

The apostles acted as authoritative pastors of the entire Church not only collectively but individually. The Gospel doctrinal and disciplinary is everywhere represented as being a *deposit*,³ a definite consignment of truth, entrusted to the Twelve to be preserved intact for the enlightenment of men.⁴ Doctrines proposed by the apostles as contained in the deposit must be accepted by all.

As rulers, the apostles were individually endowed with universal jurisdiction. Each, it is true, had a special care for his own children in Christ, and was unwilling, as a rule, to interfere with churches of another's founding. This general rule, however, admitted of exceptions. Paul concerned himself with the Romans, evangelized by Peter, and with the Colossians, evangelized by Epaphras. Peter's first epistle is addressed to "the strangers dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." The tone of the apostolic letters like that of "the decree of the apostles and elders" is unmistakeably authoritative.⁵

¹ *cfr.* Ac. xxi. 25.

³ 1 Tim. vi. 20.

² *ib.* xvi. 4.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii. 2 ; iii. 15.

⁵ *cfr.* 1 Cor. vii. 12 *sqq.* : iv. 21 ; xi. 12 ; 2 Cor. ii. 9 ; Gal. i. 1, etc.

The democratic phraseology imported into the Pauline letters by Congregational and Presbyterian apologists is not a little amusing. The apostle must not *command*. No; he may "indicate," "suggest," "recommend," "ask," "exhort,"—even "urge;" but launch a *fiat*—never.

To secure unity and integrity of faith in the Church during the apostolic age, a central magisterium was not absolutely necessary. The prophetic ministry was everywhere operative.¹ In addition the apostles, as such, were individually infallible.² Paul preached to the gentiles for fourteen years before comparing his "Gospel" with that of the other apostles. When at length he "conferred with them"³ his purpose was not to satisfy himself as to the soundness of his "Gospel,"—he never doubted it,—but rather to reassure those who, influenced by the Judaisers, were disposed to question the legitimacy of his teaching and the authenticity of his apostolate.

PARTIES IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The Judaisers.—The earliest converts to Christianity were without exception Jews. It would

¹ Prof. Sohmn and others contend that the teaching ministry in the early church was *exclusively* charismatic. This view is quite unhistorical. The apostolic office *as such* was *primarily* a teaching office.

² "Though we or an angel from heaven preach unto you a gospel other than that which we have preached unto you let him be anathema" (Gal. i. 8).

³ *ib.* ii. 12.

even seem as if the infant Church understood for some time that her doors were open only to the circumcised. The vision vouchsafed to St. Peter on the occasion of the conversion of Cornelius and the "Gospel" of St. Paul were required to enlighten men as to the Church's true character and to assure them that the ceremonial law had had its day.

Not all Jewish Christians, however, became at once reconciled to fellowship with the uncircumcised. Many persisted in teaching that the Mosaic law remained in force; that to be saved through Christ Jesus, it was necessary to be circumcised. These were the Judaisers. They were the earliest Christian heretics.

In the beginning they preached the absolute necessity of circumcision, and we already know that a dissension caused by their teaching in the Church at Antioch led to the summoning of the "council" of Jerusalem. While forcing the Judaisers to modify their teaching in regard to gentile converts "the apostles and elders," it should be observed, left them free to develop their doctrines in another direction. *Gentile* converts, it was decreed, were no longer to be regarded as bound by the law of Moses except in a few minor matters. This could be understood as implying that the law in question remained in full force for "those of the circumcision." The Judaisers were thus ostensibly in a position to argue that the Jewish Christian was nearer to God, was possessed

of a fuller measure of righteousness, than was his uncircumcised brother. Hence to be fully saved through Christ circumcision was still absolutely essential even for gentiles. Baptism without circumcision was a mere step towards justification.

Paul spent himself in combating this teaching. His figure looms large in the history of the primitive Church as the arch-antagonist of the Judaisers. "If you be circumcised" he exclaimed "Christ shall profit you nothing."¹ It is noteworthy that the apostles while agreed as to the soundness of the Pauline "Gospel"² appear to have differed widely as to the proper policy to be adopted in dealing with the Judaisers. Paul's own policy was characteristic of the man. It was openly belligerent. Exasperated by their teaching and by their conduct³—they dogged his footsteps wherever he preached—he denounced them as "false brethren"⁴ and availed himself of every opportunity to crush them. Between Paul and the Judaisers it was war *à l'outrance*.

Peter, on the contrary, tried to be conciliatory. Regarding those misguided zealots as loyal, if blinded, children of Abraham, he endeavoured to win them to Christ by considerate treatment. If

¹ Gal. v. 2.

² "That Peter ultimately associated himself with Paul's principles we know for certain" (Harnack: *What is Christianity?* p. 182).

³ *cfr.* Harnack: *Mission*, vol. i, p. 48.

⁴ Gal. ii. 4.

Paul circumcised Timothy to conciliate unbaptized Jews, if he became all things to all men that he might win all to Christ, Peter would become a Jew to the Judaisers for the same great end. He would try to effect by kindness what Paul had failed to effect by denunciation. Hence we find that at Antioch, "Cephas did eat with the gentiles" until "some came from James," when he withdrew and separated himself fearing to give offence "to those who were of the circumcision."¹ For his action on this occasion he was openly admonished by Paul who realized that, in the circumstances, Peter's withdrawal was calculated to scandalize the uncircumcised. These were liable to infer from the incident that they, too, were bound to conform to the Jewish way of living. Paul, therefore, tells the Galatians that, on that occasion, he "withstood Cephas to the face."² The episode was not forgotten by the Judaisers, who cleverly took advantage of it and of Peter's general policy of conciliation, to proclaim him their leader and champion as against the renegade from Tarsus. They styled themselves Cephasites.

They seem to have had their emissaries at work in every Pauline church.³ Openly rejecting the "Gospel" of Paul they set themselves to destroy

¹ Gal. ii. 11-12.

² *ib.* v. 11.

³ We have evidence that they were to be found not only in the mother-church but also in Antioch, Corinth, Galatia and Rome.

his influence and to undermine his authority with his own "children in Christ." When we recollect that the nucleus of each church was composed of converted Jews and proselytes, it does not surprise us to find that the teaching of the Judaisers found a ready audience everywhere. The Acts and the Pauline letters would lead one to infer that in every church founded by the "Apostle of the Gentiles" a Judaising sect sprang up opposed to his teaching and schismatical in relation to the local organization established by him.¹

The Gnostics.—The foundation of Gnosticism is thought by many to have been already laid during the life-time of the apostles.² This was to be expected. The educated classes of that age would naturally have been disposed to see in Christianity nothing more than a new system of philosophy—a new "wisdom;"³ and many among the Greeks embraced it as such conveniently ignoring its practical or moral precepts.⁴

¹ *cfr.* Con. and H. *op. cit.*, p. 349.

² *cfr.* 1 Cor. iii. 1, which recalls the commonplace Gnostic distinction of *ψυχικοί* and *πνευματικοί*; also viii. 1, where Paul speaks of "a knowledge (*γνώσις*) that puffeth up." *cfr. ib.* i. 22–28; ii. 6–7; 1 Tim. i. 3–10; iv. 2, 3, 7; vi. 20, 2 Tim. ii. 18, 16, 23; iv. 3, 4; Col. ii. 8, 18.

³ *σοφία*, *γνώσις*. *cfr.* Con. and H., ch. xiii; Tixeront: *Hist. of Dogmas*, vol. i, p. 149.

⁴ Origen remarks that "when Christianity was embraced by many among the Greeks who were devoted to literary pursuits (*φιλολόγων*) there necessarily originated heresies, not at all however as the result of faction or strife, but through the earnest desire of educated minds to become acquainted with the doctrines of Christianity" (*contra Cels.* bk. iii. 12).

In the church at Corinth we find distinct traces of Gnostic tendencies during the life-time of its founder. The Christian system, as unfolded to the natives of that city by Paul himself, was, indeed, so simple and so practical as to afford little scope for philosophizing. But Paul was followed by a teacher who presented his doctrines in a different fashion. This was the Alexandrian Jew Apollos. A gifted orator and a philosopher, his learned exposition of the new system contrasted with the unlearned style of his predecessor, and seems to have captivated "the wisdom-seekers." Failing to realize that Christian teachers, whatever their individual merits, are ministers of the same "word," the faithful at Corinth became divided, some holding fast to the simple formulæ given them by their founder, others proclaiming themselves followers of Apollos. Among the latter would have been found those free-thinking brethren who embraced Christianity as "a wisdom" and considered themselves at liberty to criticize and explain away some of its fundamental tenets. Thus the resurrection of the dead seems to have been denied,¹ while many, enslaved by their passions, were not slow to find in Antinomianism a justification for vice. Such was their interpretation—or rather perversion—of Paul's central doctrine, that the reign of Law had been supplanted by a reign of Grace. Antinomianism and a denial of the

¹ *cf.* 1 Cor. xv. 12 ; Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

resurrection were characteristic tenets of the later Gnostics.¹

¹ Lutterbeck discovers in the Corinthian party-teaching a strange amalgam. Ostensibly conscientious Jews and upholders of the doctrines of the original apostles as against Paul, the mischief-makers at Corinth, he holds, were at heart Gnostics who plumed themselves on their σοφία or γνῶσις, while introducing into their system an element of the 'uncanny.' Their teaching was a strange admixture of magical doctrines with Alexandrian religion-philosophy. For them Christ was an æon. They taught that any one who has once acquired the true γνῶσις can sin no more. Fornication, prostitution, the eating of sacrificial meats,—even participation in heathen sacrifices, were in themselves indifferent. On the other hand they taught that "the flesh" was essentially evil. Hence they condemned marriage and denied the resurrection of the dead: (cfr. *Neutestamentliche Lehrbegriffe*, ii. 45. ff.). Lutterbeck's curious theory is shown by Rohr to be both incoherent and unhistorical (Rohr: "Paulus und die Gemeinde von Korinth auf Grund der beiden Korintherbriefe": *Biblische Studien*, Bd. iv, h. 4, s. 134). (cfr. Harnack: *Mission*, vol. i, c. 3).

CHAPTER II

ECCLESIOLOGY OF ST. PAUL

LET us now open the Pauline letters. Their author is, with one exception, the greatest personality in the history of the primitive Church. By birth a Jew, by education a Pharisee, he was the first and greatest of Christian theologians. Paul of Tarsus, was the founder of theological science. A clear virile thinker, highly educated, and deeply religious, his intellect acted as a powerful medium through which the teaching of Jesus passed while the Church was still in its infancy. Doctrinal development proper had its beginnings in his preaching. Many truths proposed in embryonic form or merely suggested by his Master, were explained, developed, and illustrated by him. Indeed so powerfully was later Christian thought influenced by his teaching that some critics accuse him of having corrupted Christianity, while others extol him as its real founder. In Paul's gospel, we are told, there is much of Paul and little of Jesus.

At present we are concerned only with the great apostle's ecclesiology. The soundness or legitimacy of his 'Gospel' will come up for discussion at the close of our next chapter when we shall have examined the personal teaching of his Master.

THE EPISTLE " TO THE EPHESIANS "

We begin with the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians. The title of the letter is somewhat misleading. Evidence of the weightiest character, internal and external, goes to show that the epistle was not originally addressed to the Church at Ephesus. It was probably an encyclical or " circular " intended not for any particular community, but for the gentile churches of Asia, or perhaps for gentile churches generally. The present title was inserted by a later hand. The date of composition is 61 A.D.¹

The argument of the letter may be summed up in a few words: To Paul, and to the other apostles and prophets, God has been pleased to reveal, for the first time in history, the true character of the Church of Christ. This revelation the inspired writer sets forth *ex professo*.² Having done so he employs it as an argumentative basis for a few general exhortations.³

It will be seen at once that the encyclical is, for us, of prime importance. It is a formal exposition of the matter in hand by a divinely enlightened teacher. It is important, too, by reason of its undoubted influence on many later documents, in-

¹ Approximately. Paul was then a prisoner at Rome. The encyclical was dictated to a scribe by its intrepid author while chained to a Roman soldier.

² cc. i-iii.

³ cc. iv-vi.

cluding probably the letters of St. Peter and the fourth gospel.

The opening chapter represents Christ as having been constituted by the Father, Lord of Creation and Head of the Universal Church: "He hath subjected all things under His feet, and hath made Him head over all the Church which is His body and the fulness of Him Who is filled all in all."¹ The Greek here translates: "He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as supreme head (κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα) to the Church which is His body, the fulness (τὸ πλήρωμα) of Him Who is being completely² filled in all ways."³ The word πλήρωμα seems to mean, *that which fills something*, either totally or partially by way of complement. A carriage with ten seats is filled by ten passengers or, when nine have been already seated, by one. Its πλήρωμα,—what fills it—is the tenth passenger, or all ten.

In Christ are found the divine nature and attributes,—the πλήρωμα of the Godhead,⁴ and yet He is not thereby filled in all respects (τὰ πάντα). His own proper πλήρωμα—what completely fills Him—is the Church, *His body*.⁵ Without the

¹ Eph. i. 22, 23.

² Gr. τὰ πάντα ("as to all things") acc. of respect.

³ Gr. τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου.

⁴ Col. i. 19; ii. 9.

⁵ As God Christ was of course *entitatively* full from the beginning: His increase with the growth of His Mystical body is a mere increase *as to term*.

Church, He would be, so to speak, a head without its proper body. The Church *completes* Christ. It is the body of which He is the head. He grows, advances towards completion, as the Church His body increases in grace and membership. Note the *present* participle—τοῦ πληρουμένου—"who *is being filled*." Christ will have completed His development, will have received His πλήρωμα, only when the Church, His body, has grown to fulness. True, the ideal Church will never be fully realized, nevertheless, it is only its complete realization which can secure to Christ His full πλήρωμα. The nature of the Church and the manner of its realization have yet to be explained.¹

Christians antecedently to their call to the faith were dead through sin. Finding us in this state God in His mercy infused life into us, by making us severally *living members of Christ*: "And when you were dead in your offences and sins, wherein in time past you walked according to the prince of the power of this air, of the spirit that now worketh in the children of unbelief, amongst whom *we* also *all* conversed in time past in the desires of our flesh . . . God . . . for His exceeding charity, . . . even when we were dead in sin, *hath quickened us together in Christ*." ² *Christianity makes us living members of Christ's living body.*

The new religion embraces all men. The wall

¹ *cfr.* Hitchcock : *Eph.*, pp. 127 *sqq*

² *Eph.* ii. 1-5.



dividing Israel from the nations has been razed. Jew and gentile become one new ¹ man in union with Christ Who has reconciled both to God *in one body*.² “Those of the uncircumcision” are reminded, that formerly they were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel.³ In Christ all men, irrespective of nationality, become citizens of one and the same commonwealth (συμπολίται).⁴ Full of his subject, the imaginative Paul here employs a new metaphor. Already he has spoken of Christians as being members of one body. Now they are citizens of the same πολιτεία. In the concluding verses of the chapter he compares them to members of one household,⁵ and to stones built together into one edifice.⁶

The same train of thought runs through the succeeding chapter. To Paul a mystery has been unfolded.⁷ The gentiles are to share in the New Dispensation. The divine purpose in their regard was not made clear to the sons of men in other generations; but now, all has become manifest. To the Apostle of the gentiles it has been divinely revealed that the uncircumcised are to be admitted to citizenship in the new commonwealth. In Christ Jesus, they will share the promise. They will fully participate in the new Dispensation. “By revela-

¹ Καὶνὸς ἄνθρωπος (iv. 24), *cfr.* Col. iii. 10 *sqq.*; 2 Cor. v. 17 (καὶνὴ κτίσις).

² Eph. ii. 15, 16.

³ ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ (Eph. ii. 12).

⁴ *ib.* v. 19. ⁵ *ib.* ⁶ *ib.* v. 20. ⁷ *ib.* iii. 3 *sqq.*

tion the mystery has been made known to me . . . which in other generations was not known to the sons of men . . . that the gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and copartners of His promise in Christ Jesus.”¹ The new *πολιτεία* will embrace, not Jews alone, nor gentiles alone, but all men. Together they will constitute one edifice, one household of God, one body. The Church is one and catholic.

If Christians are members of the body of Christ, they should live in a manner befitting their dignity. They should walk “worthy of their calling.”² The faithful should be humble, mild, patient, bearing with one another in love; “careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”³

The unity of the Church is sevenfold. Christians form together one body, quickened by one and the same Holy Spirit. They have a common hope, salvation through Christ Jesus, their common Lord and Master. They believe the same truths and have the same rite of initiation. Finally, all worship the same God: “One body and one spirit: as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, over all, through all, in all.”⁴

The unity of the Church, though manifold, is a

¹ Eph. iii. 3-6.

² *ib.* iv. 1.

³ *ib.* vv. 2, 3.

⁴ *ib.* iv. 4-6.

unity amid diversity. The living body is informed by a vital principle, in virtue of which its members, however varying as to endowments and capabilities, cooperate in harmony for the good of the whole. So with the Church. She too is an organism—a living body of which every Christian is a member. Among members of Christ's mystical body, as of all bodies, there exists a great diversity of endowments. Not all are apostles, nor all prophets, nor all evangelists; as bodily members are not all hands, nor all feet, nor all eyes. Each has its proper function, assigned it for one purpose only, the development and well-being of its fellow-members and of the whole. To recur to a metaphor employed in a preceding chapter, the individual Christian, whatever his office or standing in the Church, should act so as to perfect his fellow-Christians and thus *complete* Christ by developing and perfecting His body: "And He gave some to be apostles and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and teachers¹ for the perfecting of the saints . . . unto the building of the body of Christ . . . unto the (full) measure of the stature of the fulness (πληρώματος) of Christ."² The Church Universal is a *visible* organic unit. The ministry in question is external.

To become Christians—to be saved—we must

¹ Gr. . . τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους—one class.

² Eph. iv. 11-13.

accept certain truths revealed by Jesus. The Church is a kingdom of truth. The faithful should, therefore, aim at perfecting each other *primarily in respect to faith*. They should labour to safeguard the purity and integrity of the Christian deposit, and thus secure stability and uniformity of belief in the Church Catholic. Members, each in his proper capacity, should cooperate to secure this great end: "until we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . . that we may be no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine." ¹ A general well-ordered cooperation of this kind, founded in charity, will result in a grand all-round development of the one living body of which all are members; "that, doing the truth, in charity we may in all things grow up in Him Who is the Head, Christ; from Whom the whole body being compacted and fitly joined together by what every joint supplieth according to the operation in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity." ²

We are here reminded, incidentally, that the Church can grow only in proportion as Christ's own life permeates her in richer, fuller measure. Members of His body derive from Him alone the life of grace, by which they grow in perfection unto Him. If member perfects member, it is only by

¹ Eph. 13, 14.

² *ib.* 15, 16.

enabling it to drink more deeply of the fountain-head of all grace and perfection—our crucified Redeemer.¹

THE OTHER PAULINE LETTERS

The doctrine just summarized is fundamental in the theology of St. Paul. His letters are full of it. In his first (extant) epistle to the Corinthians, discussing the various “gifts” and ecclesiastical offices, he explains that, despite diversity of character and effect, all *χαρίσματα* proceed from the same Holy Spirit and are bestowed for one and the same general purpose, to promote the well-being of the Church. Christians, whatever their antecedents, whatever their nationality or social standing, become by baptism severally members of one and the same body of Christ: “Ye are together the body of Christ and each of you a separate

¹ Herein is found the key to our whole Sacramental system. The Christian Sacraments are so many channels down which streams of vivifying grace flow from the Head into the members. To enable the faithful to avail of these channels, to quicken dead members, to unite living members more intimately with the Head ;—in a word to renew and enrich in the souls of all the inward life of grace, “that they may be filled with the fruit of justice through Jesus Christ” (Philipp. i. 11), such is the province of the ecclesiastical ministry. St. Paul elsewhere likens the minister to a husbandman who tends a vineyard. He labours much to increase the vineshoots and to enrich their inner life. All increase, however, comes from God alone through Christ (*cfr.* 1 Cor. ix. 7 ; iii. 5-7).

member.¹ . . . For in one Spirit were *we all* baptized into one body whether Jew or gentile whether bond or free.”²

Members are endowed with a variety of gifts. Some are apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, etc., but, *as members of one body*, each is expected to discharge his proper function, to promote the well-being of his fellow-members and of the whole.³ Hence, *χαρίσματα* whose exercise edifies the Church, are to be preferred to those which primarily benefit their possessors.⁴ Christians should be ‘zealous’ for the former; and those who are endowed with them should strive so to exercise them as “to build up the Church.”⁵ Paul himself sets an example. In his

¹ Gr. *ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ* . . . The translation: “Ye are the body of Christ” seems at first sight to be scarcely accurate seeing that the original is *σῶμα Χριστοῦ* not *τὸ σῶμα Χρ.* Most exegetical critics, however, are agreed that it is not possible to arrive at the exact meaning (*a* or *the*) by a mere grammatical examination of the passage. It is best, perhaps, to read: “Ye are Christ’s body,” leaving the precise thought (as in the original) more or less indeterminate (*cfr.* iii. 16: *ναὺς θεοῦ*).

Καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέλους: Such is the reading in our text; “but the evidence is decisively in favour of *καὶ μέλη ἐκ μερῶν* = ‘et membra ex parte.’ This means either that they were members each in his assigned part; or, more probably that, taken severally, individually (*ἐκ μερῶν*) they were members” (MacRory: *Comm. in Cor.* p. 192; *cfr.*, Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 14).

² *ib.* v. 13.

⁴ *ib.* xiv. 2 *sqq.*

³ *ib.* vv. 21 *sqq.*

⁵ 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

ministry he seeks not his own good, but the good of all.¹

Writing to the Romans his doctrine is similar. God has mercifully poured out the riches of His glory upon Christians, calling them, not from the Jews only, but from the gentiles as well.² Under the new dispensation there is no distinction of race. All are equally God's people—sons of the living God.³ At baptism we die to sin, emerging from the waters of regeneration into a new life of grace in Christ Jesus.⁴ The Church is an organic unit. Christians are severally members of Christ's body, each having his proper endowment or function: "For as in one body we have many members, but all have not the same office, so we, being many are one body in Christ and fellow-members of one another."⁵ Christians should, therefore, edify each other.⁶

And to the Colossians: A great mystery, long-hidden, has been revealed.⁷ Gentiles are co-heirs of the inheritance of the saints. They have been translated by the Father into the kingdom of His Divine Son, through Whose death sinners have been saved.⁸ By baptism, those dead in sin have been "quickened together with Christ."⁹ The

¹ Cor. x. 33.

² Rom. ix. 23, 24.

³ *ib.* 25, 26.

⁴ *ib.* vi. 2-5.

⁵ *ib.* xii. 4-6.

⁶ *ib.* xv. 12.

⁷ Col. i. 26.

⁸ *ib.* v. 12.

⁹ *ib.* ii. 12 *sqq.*

Church is His mystical body of which all are members.¹ Christ is the Head. In Him dwells, bodily, the fulness of the God-head, and in Him we are made full.² Christians should, therefore, hold fast to the Head: "from Which the whole body by joints and bands being supplied with nourishment and compacted, increaseth with³ the increase of God."⁴

To sum up: The Church is cosmopolitan. Her doors are open to all men. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but faith that worketh by charity."⁵ In the new Dispensation: "there is neither gentile nor Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all."⁶

The Church is also one. Christians, diversity of situation notwithstanding, are members of one body.⁷ They form together a rounded whole, a unit. The unity of the Church is organic and visible. It is the unity of an external association.

¹ Col. i. 24.

² *ib.* ii. 9-10.

³ R. V. The Greek is αὐξέει τὴν αὐξήσιν τοῦ θεοῦ: Vulg.: *crescit* ("groweth unto").

⁴ *ib.* ii. 19.

⁵ Gal. v. 6.

⁶ Col. iii. 11.

⁷ *Corpus*—the technical legal term to designate an association (*cf.* Bat. *op. cit.*, p. 125).

PROTESTANTISM

The “invisible Church” theory is not Pauline. The *body* of which the great apostle speaks so much is an external society. We become members by submitting to an external rite of initiation: “For, in one Spirit were we all *baptized into one body* whether Jews or gentiles whether bond or free.”¹ Hence the body can be divided by schism.²

Christianity is a dispersion of societies; but, for St. Paul, there is also a society of societies.³ The Church Universal has a *visible foundation*. It is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets”⁴—not on the foundation *laid by these*, but rather on the foundation *consisting of them*.⁵ The apostles together form the foundation of an edifice into which are built all the followers of Jesus. Christians, then, constitute a visible, consolidated unit. An edifice having a visible foundation is itself visible as such.

Then, there is the visible ministry. Christ constituted some members of His body “apostles, and some evangelists, and other some pastors and

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

² *ib.* v. 25.

³ *cfr.* 1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Cor. xi. 16; xii. 28; Eph. v. 23, 24.

⁴ Eph. ii. 19 *sqq.*

⁵ *cfr.* Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

teachers," to minister visibly in His Church.¹ This ministry is doctrinal and authoritative. Its exercise will result in unity and integrity of belief among the faithful: "Until *we all* attain unto the unity of the faith and the full knowledge of the Son of God."² We may add that the "pastors and teachers" here referred to are *the elders*,—the Shepherds of Christ's flock,³ some of whom we have found legislating for the entire Church in the "Council" of Jerusalem.

The apostles shepherd the faithful.⁴ They are the authoritative "custodians of the mysteries of God."⁵ Their ministry has been assigned them by God Himself. They are His ambassadors. "He hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; for God indeed was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing to them their sins, and He hath placed in us the word of reconciliation. For Christ, therefore, we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us."⁶ The apostles are husbandmen. They tend the soil divinely entrusted to them.⁷ The faithful are God's tilled land (*γεώργιον*).⁸ They are His house, the apostles being the architects.⁹

¹ Eph. iv. 11 *sqq.*

² *ib.*

³ 1 Pet. v. 2; Ac. xx. 28.

⁷ 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6.

⁸ *ib.* v. 9. *cfr.* MacR.: *Comm. in Cor.*, p. 37.

⁹ Gal. vi. 16.

⁴ 1 Cor. ix. 7. *cfr.* Rom. xii. 7, 8.

⁵ *ib.* iv. 1.

⁶ 2 Cor. v. 18 *sqq.*

Christians, in fine, constitute a new race (γένος), a new chosen people, a new Israel of God.¹ The new Israel is an external association, a *visible unit*. Paul is ever mindful of the time when *he persecuted the Church of God*.²

The ecclesiology of St. Paul should be studied in the light of his own life. He was himself professedly an apostle, a sharer in the ministry.³ His mode of procedure should therefore square with his teaching. Are they found to correspond? Is there anything more certain than that Paul consistently acted, as if he regarded the Church as being an organic unit? Wherever he preached he established local associations, which were visible societies or nothing. They despatched and received emissaries, letters and donations, held meetings, expelled objectionable members, and were ruled by a visible local hierarchy. Paul also recognised a Church of churches,⁴ a unit of units. While unwilling, as a rule, to interfere with churches of another's founding, he makes it clear that he regarded himself as an authoritative pastor of Christian communities, wherever situated, or by whomsoever established. Of his extant letters two are addressed to non-Pauline foundations.⁵ Lastly, it was Paul who distributed in all the churches copies of the decree of the Council of Jerusalem which, by

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 9; Gal. i. 13. ³ Eph. i. 1; iii. 7.

² *cfr.* Ac. viii. 3; xxii. 4. ⁴ 1 Cor. xi. 16; 1 Tim. iii. 15.

⁵ Rom. and Col.

an exercise of external authority, legislated for the entire Church.¹

The unity of the Spirit.—Christians are bound together by the unseen bond of grace as well as by the visible bond of authority. This is commonplace among Catholic theologians, and yet how frequently we find them accused of refusing to concede any inward unity to the Spouse of Christ,—of shutting their eyes to the “unity of the Spirit.”

The accusation is quite unjust. Every Catholic child is taught that the Church is one in being *one body animated by one Spirit*.² Christians constitute a unit because energized by the same Spirit and quickened by the same Head, Christ Who is the sole source of that stream of grace by which the inner life of the Church is sustained and enriched. If this is St. Paul’s teaching it is no less the teaching of the Catholic Church. The kingdom is a kingdom of grace, and all grace springs from Christ crucified.

¹ *cfr.* Ac. xv. 41 ; xvi. 4.

² The official catechism approved by the hierarchy for general use in Ireland treats of church unity in two questions as follows :

“ Q. How is the Church one ?

A. The Church is *one* in being *one body* animated by *one spirit*, and *one fold* under *one Head and Shepherd Jesus Christ Who is over all the Church*.

Q. In what else is the Church one ?

A. The Church is also one, in all its members believing the same truths, having the same Sacraments and sacrifice, and being under one visible head on earth.”

(The italics are not mine.)

The principle of the Church's invisible unity is, of course, grace,—the Spirit. She is one because her members throb with the same life of grace infused from the same source;—one, because energized by the same Holy Spirit indwelling in her members. “The unity of the Church,” writes Manning, “flows from the unity of its Head, of its life . . . from the unity of the Incarnate Son Who reigns in it and of the Holy Ghost Who organizes it by His inhabitation.”¹ In a word, and speaking broadly, the principle of the Church's invisible unity is that inward, manifold, complex life of grace derived from the Head and quickening the members. To develop, to enrich this life is to “complete” Christ by building up His body.

Are we, then, confronted with an “invisible Church?” Protestant divines speak so freely of the “invisible Church,” that there is danger of overlooking the fact that the very expression as applied to an eternal organization is little short of a contradiction. If a Church, how invisible? And if invisible, how a Church? The Church in the New Testament is an external association. Its primary principle of unity is authority.² That its members are bound together by an inward bond of grace is not denied. We even speak of the Church as a body *energized* and

¹ *Temp. Mission of H. Gh.*, p. 29.

² This is strongly denied by Dr. Gore. I reserve my criticism of his position for a subsequent chapter.

animated by the Holy Spirit. But is she, therefore, an *invisible organic unit*? Do soldiers constitute an invisible army because animated by a spirit of patriotism? Let us not abuse language. The title "invisible Church" is not only unscriptural but contradictory.

Christians at baptism received the Holy Spirit.¹ Harnack states that "to be the child of God and to be gifted with the Spirit are simply the same as being a disciple of Christ. That a man is not truly a disciple unless he is pervaded by God's Spirit is a point which the Acts of the Apostles fully recognize. The pouring out of the Spirit is placed in the forefront of the narrative. The author is conscious that the Christian religion would not be the highest and the ultimate religion unless it brought every individual into an immediate and living connexion with God."² We say that while it is true that Christians at baptism are filled with the Holy Spirit, it is no less true that grace and the Spirit are amissible. There have been *lapsi* in the Church from the first. It is only individual members, however, who forfeit the "inward gift." The Church in her corporate capacity is permanently animated by the Spirit of God. In virtue of His abiding presence she is the pillar and the ground of truth.

¹ *Properly* speaking the Holy Ghost was given not by baptism but by the accompanying rite of Confirmation.

² *What is Christianity?* p. 168.

The Church of Christ therefore involves two orders, the external and the internal. St. Paul teaches that of the two the internal is the more important. The visible subserves the invisible ; the outward is for the inward. The sole purpose of an external organization and a visible ministry is to secure unity and integrity of faith in all, and to unite us to Christ and to each other by the real, if mystical, bond of grace. The " life of the Spirit " is at once the Church's animating principle and her *raison d'être*.

It will not have escaped the reader that Paul frequently writes as if the body and the " soul " ¹ of the Church were coextensive. This is intelligible. If baptism is the door to a visible organization, it is also a laver of regeneration. By baptism we become saints—*sancti*.²

And yet grace is amissible. Paul was well aware of it. The apostle who ordered the excommunication of the incestuous adulterer and who denounced " the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness " which were found among the Christians at Corinth, did not regard the body and the " soul " of the Church as being, really coextensive. Facts had to be faced, and even at that early date it was notorious that numbers of the " saints " had

¹ *v. infra*, c. ix.

² *cfr.* 1 Cor. vi. 11 ; Gal. iii. 27, and apostolic letters *passim*.

failed "to walk worthy of their calling." There were *lapsi* everywhere. Hence, when Paul speaks of Christians as if all were actually in the state of grace, he merely implies that baptism made them saints, that they were expected to persevere, and that, speaking generally, the "saints" were truly such. He spoke in general terms.

SCHISM

St. Paul's first¹ epistle to the Corinthians was written during his three-years' residence at Ephesus. Brethren from Achaia had conveyed to him the disastrous intelligence that divisions (*σχίσματα*) had arisen in the Church at Corinth. "For it hath been signified unto me," he writes, ". . . that there are contentions among you. Now this I say that everyone of you saith: I indeed am of Paul; and I of Apollo; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."² There were at least three parties.³

The precise character of the *σχίσματα* at Corinth is difficult to determine. Proceeding to explain the error of the factionists, Paul lays it down as a first

¹ *i.e.* His first *extant*. We know that at least one earlier letter to the Cor. has perished.

² 1 Cor. i. 10 *sqq.*

³ The words: "and I of Christ" were probably added by Paul himself not as the watchword of a faction, but as summing up the correct Christian position as against all factionists (*cfr.* MacR.: *op. cit.*, p. 8).

principle that when a district is evangelized a Christian edifice is founded. The edifice is *the Gospel*; ¹ Christ the foundation.² Succeeding teachers build on the foundation already laid. All are ministers of the same 'word.' To build upon a foundation other than the original is to preach heresy.

Paul himself founded the edifice at Corinth. Apollos following him, built upon the existing foundation. Their "gospels" were identical. The doctrinal differences which gave rise to the factions were of the factionists' own making.

The language and argumentation in chapters I.-V. seem to suggest that the divisions in the Church were to some extent the outcome of false teaching. Paul implies, apparently, that the factionists, or some of them, had become tainted with heresy. He proceeds at once to state that if any teacher violate (*φθείρει*) the temple of God (by false doctrine ³) "*him shall God destroy*" (*φθερεῖ*).⁴ "Let no man deceive himself," he adds pointedly. "If any man among you be wise, let him become a fool that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."⁵ The latter remark seems intended for gnostic ears.

¹ *cfr.* Prat : *La Théologie de Saint Paul*, vol. i., p. 132.

² 1 Cor. iii. 11.

³ *cfr.* MacR. *op. cit.*, p. 44 ; Prat. : *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 133.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii. 17.

⁵ *ib.* v. 19.

As to the factions *in individuo*, the Cephasites were the Judaisers,¹ whose avowed purpose, we found, was to pull down the Pauline flag in every church. "Those of Cephas" would thus have repudiated the authority of the founder, and consequently that of the local organization set up by him. They were schismatical.

Of the followers of Apollos we know practically nothing; and it may well be that, as a body, they formed a mere coterie within the local church. When, however, we recollect that some members of the faction in question were probably tainted with gnosticism,² and that the party, as a whole, set itself up in opposition to those who proclaimed themselves "loyalists"—followers of the founder—we find it difficult to imagine that all its members continued to acknowledge the Pauline flag. It would not surprise us to learn that not alone the Cephasites, but some of the Apollonites, had lapsed into local schism.³ Our conjecture, we may add, gains support from the fact that Paul's letter of reproof opens with a strong statement of his apostolic authority.⁴

Volumes have been written upon the Corinthian

¹ MacR. p. 9, Con. and H., pp. 349, 378.

² *v. supra.*, ch. ii.

³ Those "of Paul," although perhaps imbued in a measure with the spirit of party, were, we take it, sound in doctrine and loyal to the established hierarchy.

⁴ 1 Cor. i. 1 *sqq.*

σχίσματα. Prat considers that they were not schisms properly speaking, nor even sects. All professed the same faith, frequented the same assemblies and broke the same bread. They formed parties, he thinks, somewhat as coteries spring up to-day around orators or lecturers of note. He admits, however, that the divisions at Corinth were schismatical *in tendency* (. . . des coteries se formaient qui menaçaient de dégénérer en schismes) ; and that some of the factionists were inclined to censure Paul's acts, and *to emancipate themselves from his rule* (. . . enclins à censurer ses actes et à s'émanciper de sa règle).¹

Conybeare and Howson, on the other hand, contend that some of the divisions were of a much more serious character. The Cephasites, they hold, were the Judaisers who were openly antagonistic to the person and to the doctrines of St. Paul, "whose apostleship they denied, whose motives they calumniated, and whose authority they persuaded the Corinthians to repudiate. . . . In every church established by St. Paul these constituted a schismatic party opposed to his teaching and hostile to his person. . . . The "Christines" were extreme Judaisers." ²

Dr. MacRory argues strongly for three parties only, but favours the view that the Cephasites were schismatical. "Some of the Corinthians,"

¹ *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 125.

² *Con. and H.*, pp. 378, 349, 350.

he writes, "gloried foolishly in Paul as their leader ; others despising, perhaps, Paul's preaching, admired the eloquence of Apollos, while others, again, preferred Peter to both and refused to recognise Paul's authority. These were probably Judaisers. . . ." ¹

Rohr holds for four parties. The Apollonites, he thinks, were a mere coterie who admired Apollos as against Paul ; without, however, rejecting the authority of the latter. The Cephasites were Judaisers who represented Paul as a pseudo-apostle, many of whose doctrines were directly opposed to those of *the original apostles*. "Those of Paul" constituted a loyalist anti-Judaistic party, whose watchword would have been : "Emancipation from the Law." Finally, the "Christines" were an anti-party section who themselves eventually degenerated into a party. The divisions, he thinks, were not strictly schismatical. Separate services were not held, and the community, as a whole, still acknowledged the authority of the founder. ²

Harnack upholds the strictly schismatical character of the Cephasites. He conjectures that originally there were Jewish Christian communities in the Diaspora (not simply a Jewish set inside Gentile Christian communities), and that they were

¹ *Comm. in Cor.*, p. 9.

² Rohr : "Paulus und die Gemeinde von Korinth" :—*Biblische Studien*. Bd. iv, h. 4, s. 149 ff.

not confined to the provinces bordering on Palestine. He also holds that one Jewish Christian party persisted *in fighting the Gentile Church as a false church*.¹

But the precise nature of the σχίσματα at Corinth is for us a secondary consideration. We are primarily concerned only with Paul's letter of reproof. In it the apostle discusses the morality of schism. Before examining the document it may be well to call attention to the author's general teaching on the character of the ecclesiastical *magisterium*.

For St. Paul the Church is primarily a kingdom of truth. We are saved by accepting certain doctrines revealed by Christ and entrusted to the custody of the apostles.² The "word" is therefore a "*deposit*,"³ and alone constitutes the sound teaching,⁴ the doctrine of God our Saviour.⁵ This teaching is the same for all: the Gospel is one.

The principle of authority is everywhere upheld in the Pauline letters. To argue to the reasonableness or otherwise of doctrines proposed by the apostles is contrary to the spirit of Christianity.

"If any man . . . be contentious," he writes, "we have no such custom, nor the Church of God."⁶ The truths of the new religion are accepted on authority. The deposit is effectively guarded, not

¹ *Mission*, vol. i, pp. 61-63.

⁴ *ib.* iv. 3.

² 1 Cor. xv.

⁵ Tit. ii. 10.

³ 1 Tim. vi. 20.

⁶ 1 Cor. xi. 16.

by argument or reasoning, but by the exercise of an external *magisterium*. The faith is statutory. Prophecy itself is genuine only when it conforms to the received teaching.¹

The magisterium will not lapse with the death of the apostles. The deposit will be entrusted by them to the custody of a line of successors who alone will constitute its authoritative guardians and exponents.² Subjection to ecclesiastical authority is the Christian's *sole safeguard* in matters of faith and of discipline. Schism is ruinous. To break with the Church is to break with the "pillar and the ground of truth."³

The Church speaks with an authoritativeness that is absolute. From her teaching there is no appeal. "Though we or an angel from heaven preach unto you any other gospel than that which we have preached unto you let him be anathema."⁴ Definitive teaching is absolutely irreformable.

The act by which we accept an article of faith is therefore an act of *obedience*.⁵ The Christian who lapses into heresy is disobedient.⁶ The Church is instructed to deal with heretics in accordance

¹ Cor. xiv. 37.

² *cfr.* 2 Tim. ii. 2 ; iii. 14 ; Tit. iii. 9-11.

³ 1 Tim. iii. 15.

⁴ Gal. i. 8.

⁵ Rom. vi. 17 ; 2 Cor. x. 6, 7.

⁶ *cfr.* Tit. i. 10.

with the principle of authority already explained. She is not to reason with them. They have disobeyed her. If they refuse to submit after two warnings they are to be excommunicated.¹

But Paul's teaching on the morality of schism is best summed up in the indignant question which he hurls at the Corinthian factionists: "Is Christ divided" ? ² For him divisions among the faithful are *absolutely sinful*. The Church, local and universal, is an external society. It is an organic unit. *As such* it is the body of Christ. To divide the Church is to divide Christ.

Paul takes pains to make the evil-doers feel the force of the argument. He begins by stating that Christians "have been baptized into one body, whether Jews or gentiles, whether bond or free."³ He then proceeds to discuss the living body and the meaning of its organic unity. "The body," he argues, "is not one member but many. . . . God hath set the members in the body . . . many members indeed, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand: I need not thy help; nor again, the head to the feet: I have no need of you. But God hath tempered the body together . . . that there might be no schism in the body, but that members should be mutually careful for one another."⁴ "Now," he adds, "you are the

¹ Tit. iii. 10.

³ *ib.* xii. 13.

² 1 Cor. i. 13.

⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 14-26.

body of Christ and severally members thereof.”¹ Paul could not have expressed himself in clearer terms. His argument leaves schismatics no loophole of escape. They are never excused. In dividing the Church they divide the body of Christ.²

¹ Cor. xii. 27 (R. V.).

² *cfr.* Gal. v. 20, 21; where Paul lays it down that those who cause *dissensions and sects* (διχοστασίαι, αἵρέσεις) shall not obtain the kingdom of God.

EXCURSUS

Ecclesiology of St. Peter.—Two encyclical letters of St. Peter have come down to us. Both were probably written from Rome; one about 64 A.D.,¹ the other a short time before his martyrdom.

The ecclesiology of these epistles is quite Pauline, in expression no less than in thought. Christianity is a visible unit, a confraternity.² The faithful are co-heirs to the same inheritance,³ regenerated, born into a new life in Christ,⁴ Who is the sole source of Sanctification for all.⁵ They are living stones built together into the same edifice, Christ being the corner-stone.⁶ They form together a single flock, shepherded by Him.⁷ They are an elect race (γένος), a kingly priesthood, a holy nation (ἔθνος), a purchased people (λαός).⁸ They constitute the new Israel (λαὸς θεοῦ).

In the Church we find a variety of charisms. Each member is expected to exercise his proper "gift" for the edification and spiritual advancement of the brethren: "As every man hath received grace, ministering the same to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of

¹ *cfr.* Bat., *op. cit.*, p. 111.

² 1 Pet. i. 22.

³ *ib.* v. 4; iii. 22.

⁴ *ib.* ii. 2.

⁵ *ib.* ii. 24.

⁶ *ib.* vv. 3-8.

⁷ *ib.* v. 25.

⁸ *ib.* v. 9.

God.”¹ Christians are expected “to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”²

We are saved through faith.³ The Gospel is one and unchanging.⁴ Even prophetic or charismatical utterances must conform to the received teaching: “If any man speak let him speak the words of God” (λόγια θεοῦ).⁵ Unity and purity of doctrine are secured through subjection to authority.⁶

Schism and heresy go hand in hand, and are utterly reprehensible. Christians are warned to guard their faith against “lying teachers who bring in sects of perdition (αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας) and deny the Lord Who bought them.”⁷ A dreadful retribution awaits such evil-doers: “The Lord knoweth how . . . to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be tormented; and especially them who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise government. Audacious and self-willed they fear not to bring in sects blaspheming.”⁸

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 10.

⁴ 1 Pet. i. 25.

² 2 Pet. iii. 18.

⁵ *ib.* iv. 11.

³ *ib.* i. 3.

⁶ *ib.* v.

⁷ 2 Pet. ii. 1. St. Peter seems to have here in mind those primitive perverters of the New Message who, proclaiming that the Law no longer existed for the Christian, found in Antinomianism a doctrinal justification of loose living. They were men “who lived riotously, through whom the way of truth was evil spoken of” (*ib.* v. 2).

⁸ *ib.* v. 10.

CHAPTER III

THE PERSONAL TEACHING OF JESUS

THE CHRIST IN PROPHECY

A DISCUSSION of the character and the office of the Messiah foretold by the Holy Spirit forms the best introduction to the ecclesiology of Jesus. The Galilean Prophet proclaimed Himself the Christ or nothing.¹ When the Samaritan woman

¹ Every name which our Lord applies to Himself or accepts has attached to it a Messianic significance :

- (a) *Jesus* (Gr. Ἰησοῦς, Hebr. יֵשׁוּעַ : 'Yahve is salvation').

This was a common male name among the Jews, but was divinely bestowed upon the Son of Mary because He was to "save His people from their sins" (Mt. i. 21).

- (b) *Christ* (Gr. χριστός : 'anointed').—This name is an exact rendering of the Hebrew מָשִׁיחַ Messiah. Jesus accepted the title ὁ χριστός on at least two occasions (Mt. xvi. 16, 17 ; Mk. xiv. 61, 62).

- (c) *Son of Man*.—This is our Lord's favourite title. The expression was originally nothing more than a characteristic Hebraism for 'man' (cfr. Job xxv. 6). "But the use to which David put it in designating one seated at the right hand of the Most High (Ps. lxxix. 16-18), and the meaning which Daniel gave it as denoting Him to whom the Empire of the world had been promised for ever (Dan. vii. 13-17, 10-16), shaped the expression into a more definite

observed that the Messias, at His coming, would teach them all things, Jesus said to her: "I am He who am speaking with thee."¹ He was then on His way from Judea to Galilee at the beginning of His public life: "And when He was come to Nazareth . . . He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day" and publicly proclaimed Himself the Christ foretold by Isaias.² The claim was made by Him again and again during the whole course of His public ministry: "I ought to mention," writes Harnack, "that some scholars of note—and among them Wellhausen—have expressed a doubt whether

signification until it became a proper name and resolved itself into a characteristic title of the Messias" (Brassac: *The Gospels*, ii. 3. 3; *cfr.* Just. M. *Dial.* c). The Synoptists represent our Lord as applying the title to Himself seventy-nine times.

(d) *Son of God*.—This title to which Jesus lays claim so frequently, especially in the fourth gospel, was recognized by the Jews in the time of our Lord as strictly Messianic. For Harnack the name "Son of God" implies nothing more than a special knowledge of God as the Father. The expression "Son of Man," on the other hand, seems to him intelligible only in a Messianic sense (*cfr.* *What is Christianity?* pp. 127 *sqq.*).

(e) *King of the Jews, King of Israel, Son of David*.—The use of these titles was systematically avoided by Jesus Himself, Who saw that they were liable to be misunderstood by the carnal-minded Jews. When others bestowed them upon Him, however, He acquiesced (*cfr.* Mt. xxi. 9; Mk. xi. 10; xv. 2; Lk. xix. 38; xxiii. 3; Jo. i. 49; xii. 13).

¹ Jo. iv. 25, 26.

² Lk. iv. 16–24.

Jesus described Himself as the Messias. In that doubt I cannot concur ; nay, I think that it is only by wrenching what the evangelists tell us off its hinges that the opinion can be maintained.”¹

Three-fold Office of the Christ.—The Messias of the Old Testament is *prophet*, *priest*, and *king*. As prophet the Spirit of the Lord is upon him,² the Spirit of wisdom, of knowledge, and of godliness.³ Anointed of God, He is sent to preach to the meek, to heal the contrite of heart, to announce a release of captives and deliverance to them that are in prison, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God : to comfort all that mourn.⁴ A Jewish prophet,⁵ He will be a light to the gentiles.⁶ He will be a leader and a master to them.⁷ Woe to those who will not hear Him and follow His instructions. In His mouth are God’s own words.⁸

As priest, the Messias is an intermediary, a go-between. Greater than Moses, He is the mediator of a new and everlasting covenant.⁹ The Messias will reconcile fallen humanity with the Creator. He will be a Saviour, not of the Jews alone, but of

¹ *What is Christianity?* p. 133.

² Is. xli. 1 ; xlii. 1.

³ *ib.* xi. 2.

⁴ *ib.* lxi. 1, 2. *cf.* Lk. iv. 18, 19.

⁵ Deut. xviii. 18.

⁶ Is. xlii. 6 ; xlix. 6 ; *cf.* Lk. i. 79 ; ii. 32.

⁷ Deut. xviii. 19 ; *cf.* Ac. iii. 22, 23 ; vii. 37 ; Mk. xvi. 16.

⁸ *ib.* lv. 4.

⁹ Is. xlii. 6 ; lv. 3 ; lxi. 8.

all men : “ And the Lord said : ‘ it is a small thing that Thou shouldst be My servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to convert the dregs of Israel. Behold I have given Thee to be the light of the gentiles that Thou mayest be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth.’ ” ¹

The Messiah will save the world by spending Himself for it.² He will even be immolated, to atone for sin.³ The numerous sacrifices and sin-offerings of the Old Law are no longer acceptable to the Lord. He demands a nobler victim. “ Then, said I, behold I come.” ⁴ The offering is spontaneous and is accepted. Man’s guilt is thus vicariously atoned for. “ He was wounded for our iniquities ; He was bruised for our sins. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him and by His bruises we are healed. Like sheep we had gone astray, but the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of all.” He was offered because it was His own will.⁵ The manner of His death is cruel ⁶ and shameful,⁷ but by it we have been reconciled to God. To profit by the redemption, however, it is necessary to do penance.⁸

The Christ *offers Himself* in sacrifice. He is at once priest and victim. His priesthood is everlasting.⁹ We are, therefore, prepared to find

¹ Is. xlix. 6.

² *ib.* v. 4.

³ *ib.* liv. 4 *sqq.*

⁴ Ps. xxxix. 7.

⁵ Is. liii. 4 *sqq.*

⁶ Ps. xxi. 14-17.

⁷ Wis. ii. 10.

⁸ Is. lix. 20.

⁹ Ps. civ. 4.

reference made to a perpetual *sacrifice*,—to a clean oblation which will be offered in every land and for all time.¹

The Messiah is also *king*. He is Prince of the new Jerusalem, a mighty conqueror, who goes forth from Sion and subdues His enemies.² The Lord Himself will strengthen and prosper Him, giving empire to His king and exalting the horn of His anointed one.³

The Kingdom in Prophecy.—The Messianic kingdom is a restored theocracy. A glorious future awaits the sons of Israel. Sion is now barren, despised, destitute ; but the Lord will one day raise her up and make her the mother of countless children.⁴

The new theocracy is *catholic* ; it is a world-kingdom. The Saviour of Sion shall rule from sea to sea.⁵ “The ends of the earth shall be converted to the Lord, and the gentiles shall adore in His sight : For the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall have dominion over the nations.”⁶ The Jews as a body are excluded from the kingdom because of their sins : God has divorced the synagogue for her iniquities and wedded a new theocracy wherein a gentile element preponderates.⁷

The Messiah will reign in a kingdom of peace and

¹ Mal. i. 11.

⁴ Is. xlix. 14, 21.

² Ps. cix.

⁵ Zach. ix. 9, 10.

³ *ib. cfr.* 1 Kings ii. 10.

⁶ Ps. xxi. 28, 29.

⁷ Is. l. 1 *sqq.*

security.¹ The liberator of Sion is pre-eminently a prince of peace. He is kind and meek.² If He does battle it is in the interests of justice and truth.³ His kingdom is, therefore, spiritual. It is a kingdom of godliness.⁴

Primarily, however, it is a kingdom of religious truth. The new Jerusalem will be a shining light to a world of darkness and infidelity. The effulgence of her glory will attract all nations to her.⁵ The gentiles shall walk in her light,⁶ and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.⁷ The citizens of the Messianic kingdom are those, whether Jew or gentile, who come to the knowledge of God and who by repentance for sin committed avail of the redemption.⁸

The popular concept of the kingdom was of a much lower order. The Messiah of Jewish imagining was a great prophet-king, another David, who would restore the fallen fortunes of the house of Jacob, and make Sion the centre of the earth. In the new kingdom God's chosen people would eat the riches of the gentiles⁹ and be gluttoned with the homage of the nations.¹⁰ The restored theocracy would be a glorious terrestrial kingdom, the Christ

¹ Is. xi. 6 *sqq.*

⁴ Is. lx. 17-18.

² *ib.* xlii. 1-3, 14.

⁵ *ib.* lx. 1 *sqq.*

³ Ps. xliv. 5.

⁶ *ib.* v. 3.

⁷ *ib.* xi. 9.

⁸ Is. lix. 20 ; xi. 9 ; Ps. xxi. 28, 29 ; Deut. xviii. 19.

⁹ *ib.* lxi. 6.

¹⁰ *ib.* xlix. 22 ; lxi. 5.

being an earthly prince or judge, nothing more. Such is the character of the Messianic hope which finds expression in the apocalyptic and Rabbinical literature of the period which immediately preceded the birth of Jesus.¹

REALIZATION OF THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES IN JESUS

Jesus a Prophet.—In Jesus and in His Church we come upon a marvellous fulfilment of Messianic prophecy. Jesus is primarily a prophet. His is a preaching mission.² He was sent by the Father to seek out the lost sheep,³ to call sinners to repentance,⁴ to save the souls of men.⁵

Jesus a Priest.—He is also a priest—a priest, moreover, Who gives His life for our redemption: “The Son of Man is come not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a redemption for many.”⁶ He is the good shepherd who sacrifices Himself for His sheep.⁷ He gives His flesh for the life of the world.⁸ He has a baptism wherewith He is to be baptized and longs for its accomplishment.⁹ It is the baptism of His passion and death.¹⁰ In His priestly capacity, He is the mediator of a new covenant which will endure for

¹ *cfr.* Brassac : *op. cit.* ii. 1. ³ Mt. xviii. 11.

² Mk. i. 38.

⁴ *ib.* ix. 13 ; Mk. ii. 17.

⁵ Mt. xviii. 13, 14.

⁶ *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*—Mt. xx. 28 ; Mk. x. 45.

⁷ Jo. x. 11, 18.

⁹ Lk. xii. 50.

⁸ *ib.* vi. 57.

¹⁰ Mk. x. 34 ; Mt. xx. 18, 19.

ever. This covenant He seals with His own blood, poured out to atone for sin.¹

Jesus a King.—When the elders and the chief priests arraigned our Lord before Pilate, “they accused Him, saying: ‘We have found this man perverting our nation . . . and proclaiming that He is Christ the king.’ Then Pilate asked Him, saying: ‘Art Thou the King of the Jews?’” and Jesus replied in the affirmative.² On the occasion of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, a few days previously, He had been hailed as “King of Israel.”³ If, however, we prescind from the narrative of the last week of His ministry, we find that there are on record only two instances of His having been referred to as “King of the Jews” or “King of Israel.”⁴ We have already suggested the explanation of His own consistent reticence as to His kingship. Had He frankly proclaimed Himself their prince, the Jews would have misunderstood the character of the kingdom, and, raising the standard of revolt, would have involved Him with the Roman authorities.

THE KINGDOM IN THE GOSPELS

“And in those days cometh John the Baptist preaching in the desert of Judea, and saying: ‘Do penance for *the kingdom of heaven* is at hand’”⁵

¹ Mt. xxvi and ||.

³ Mt. xxi. and ||.

² Lk. xxiii. 1-3.

⁴ *ib.* ii. 2. Jo. i. 49.

⁵ Mt. iii. 1-3.

All who heard understood ; ‘ the kingdom ’ was the Messianic kingdom. John expressly stated that his mission was that of precursor to the approaching Messiah.¹ The reign of the Promised One was at hand and men were to prepare for it by repentance.

The announcement took no one by surprise. The time was accomplished. Daniel’s seventy weeks of years were already filled, and the advent of the Christ had been eagerly awaited.

In the gospels we find the Messianic kingdom referred to by various names. It is spoken of as “ the kingdom of heaven,”² “ the kingdom of God,”³ “ the kingdom of Christ,”⁴ or, simply, “ the kingdom.”⁵ Occasionally the name is synonymous with life eternal,⁶ and, in one or two instances, it seems to denote nothing more than God’s invisible sovereignty in the hearts of men.⁷ These applications of the term are, however, exceptional. As ordinarily and properly employed,

¹ Mt. xi. 10 ; Mk. i. 2 ; Lk. i. 17, 26 ; vii. 27 ; Jo. iii. 28.

² *ib.* iii. 2 ; iv. 17 ; xi. 11, 12 ; xiii. 11 ; xxiv. 52 ; xvi. 19 ; xviii. 1 ; 23 ; xx. 1 ; xxii. 2 ; xxiii. 13.

³ *ib.* xxi. 31, 43 ; Mk. i. 14, 15 ; iv. 11, 26, 30 ; viii. 39 ; x. 14, 15, 23, 24 ; xv. 43.

⁴ *ib.* xiii. 41 ; xvi. 28 ; xx. 21 ; Lk. xxii. 30 ; Jo. xviii. 36.

⁵ *ib.* iv. 23 ; viii. 12 ; xiii. 38 ; xxiv. 14 ; Lk. xxii. 29 ; xii. 32.

⁶ *ib.* xxv. 34 ; Mk. ix. 46 ; Lk. xxiii. 42, 43.

⁷ *ib.* v. 10, 33 ; Lk. xi. 2 ; Mk. x. 15.

it denotes the visible assemblage of Christ's followers on earth.¹

The ecclesiastical signification of the name is set aside by modern critics. "Jesus," we are told "announced the advent of an eschatological kingdom (a purely future event), and preached besides an inward kingdom (present or making its entrance at the moment). The latter is the 'inner coming' of God in the heart of the individual. History has shown that in so far as He proclaimed the former the message of Jesus was husk."² In the following pages we hope to show that 'the kingdom' of the synoptists is not alone apocalyptic and inward, but ecclesiastical as well."

The Kingdom Spiritual.—The Jews had been expecting an earthly kingdom: Jesus gradually disillusioned them. "My kingdom," He said, "is not of this world."³ It was the antithesis of "the world." Jesus came as a physician of *souls*, to

¹ There is a notable diversity in terminology between the fourth gospel and the synoptics. In the former the expression "the kingdom" occurs only three times (iii. 3, 5; xviii. 36). The church 'militant' is referred to as a *flock* (x. 16; xxi. 15, 17); while the kingdom, in its glorious phase, or as denoting the invisible reign of God in our souls by grace, is referred to as "life" or "eternal life," the supernatural life infused into us on earth and enduring beyond the grave,—life in time and beyond time (*cfr.* i. 4; iii. 36; v. 29; vi. 33, 35, 51, 53; viii. 12; xi. 25; xx. 31).

² *cfr.* Harnack: *What is Christianity?* pp. 53, 58.

³ Jo. xviii. 36.

seek and to save.¹ His kingdom was therefore spiritual. He sets it over against the kingdom of Satan.² Beelzebub is His arch-antagonist. He it is who sifts the ministers of the kingdom as wheat,³ who sows tares in Christ's field,⁴ and takes the word out of the hearts of men.⁵ He is *the* enemy (ὁ ἐχθρός)⁶.

Men were beset by demons, until Christ came. He overthrew the forces of darkness. He banished unclean spirits, casting them out of the possessed, and invested His disciples with a similar power.⁷ His casting out of devils, He assigned as proof that the kingdom of God had come.⁸ To the question : "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" He replied : "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's: and to God the things that are God's."⁹ The two orders must not be mixed up.

Jesus was the Word made flesh Who dwelt among us "*full of grace and truth.*"¹⁰ Of His fulness (πλήρωμα) we have all received.¹¹ The Law was given by Moses: grace and truth came by

¹ Lk. xix. 10 ; v. 31 ; Mk. ii. 17.

⁴ Mt. xiii. 39.

² Mt. xii. 26 ; Lk. xi. 18.

⁵ Lk. viii. 12.

³ Lk. xxii. 31.

⁶ *ib.* x. 19.

⁷ Mt. viii. 32 ; x. 8 ; Mk. i. 25.

⁸ Mt. xii. 28 ; Lk. xi. 20.

⁹ Mt. xxii. 17, 21 ; *cfr.* Mk. xii. 13-17 ; Lk. xx. 21, 26.

¹⁰ Jo. i. 14 ; Lk. xix. 10.

¹¹ *ib.* v. 16.

Jesus Christ.¹ In and through Him men have been *enlightened and sanctified*.

He is a divine liberator. He is sent not to condemn but to save²—to redeem a race enslaved by sin. He frees men by enlightening them. He is the Life,³ and His mission is to give life to men.⁴ He is Truth itself come to enlighten the world.⁵ Through Him men get to know the truth, and the truth sets them free.⁶ “This is eternal life that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”⁷ We are sanctified through the truth.⁸ To enlighten, and, by enlightening, to sanctify and save: such was the mission of the Word made flesh.

Jesus was primarily *a teacher*. Being divine, He was authoritative. His doctrines were strange; much of His teaching seemed impossible of acceptance. It mattered not; His was the teaching of a God-man, and as such had to be received by everyone without questioning or hesitancy. His discourse on “the bread of life,” for example, so shocked His disciples that many went back and walked no more with Him. Then Jesus said to the Twelve: “Will you also go away?” and Simon Peter answered: “Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”⁹

¹ Jo. v. 17.

⁵ *ib.* iii. 19; viii. 12; xii. 46.

² *ib.* iii. 15-17.

⁶ *ib.* viii. 32.

³ *ib.* xiv. 6.

⁷ *ib.* xvii. 3.

⁴ *ib.* x. 10.

⁸ *ib.* v. 19.

⁹ *ib.* vi. 67-69.

Absolute authoritativeness and finality characterized the personal teaching of Jesus. At His coming the thinking world was in a state of utter confusion. Conflicting systems of philosophy distracted men's minds, and religions were being multiplied. The educated classes were divided on the most fundamental questions, practical as well as speculative ; and many had come to think that good and bad, true and false, were matters of opinion.¹ When Jesus stood before Pilate and announced that He was come to give testimony to the truth : " Yes," replied the impatient governor, " but what is truth ? " ² Scepticism was rampant.

Their leaders divided, the uneducated were blown about by every wind of doctrine. Incapable of independent research, they found themselves adrift on a sea of speculation knowing not what to hold nor whom to follow.

Then came Jesus. Into a world of thought chaotic, restless, conflicting, He introduced an element of order and stability. Teaching with an authority which was absolute³ because divine, He brought satisfaction and rest to the wearied souls of men : " Come unto me," He said, " all you that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you

¹ *cfr.* Just. M. *Ap.* i. 28.

² Jo. xviii. 37, 38. *cfr.* MacRory : *Comm.* in Jo. p. 313.

³ " In His preaching," writes Harnack, " Jesus strikes the mightiest notes ; He offers men an inexorable alternative ; he leaves them no escape " (*What is Christianity ?* p. 38).

rest.”¹ “I am the Way, the Truth, the Life.”² In the teaching of Jesus there was no stammering. “Brief and concise utterances fell from Him; for He was no mere sophist, but His word was the power of God.”³ “The common people were in admiration at His doctrine, for He taught as one having authority.”⁴

The Kingdom Catholic.—“When the Baptist had been cast into prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and saying: “the time is accomplished and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the gospel.”⁵ “The Gospel” was the name given to the doctrines proposed by Jesus. Those who accepted them constituted the kingdom. The gospel was the word of the kingdom.⁶

Men are saved by coming to a knowledge of the truth. The truth must therefore be proposed to them: the gospel must be preached. In the beginning Jesus taught personally and unaided.⁷ Later He was assisted and finally succeeded by a number of disciples, whom He specially instructed and sent forth to preach with His own authority.⁸

¹ Mt. xi. 27 (R. V.).

³ Justin M. *Ap.* i. 14.

² Jo. xiv. 6.

⁴ Mt. vii. 28, 29.

⁵ Mk. i. 14.

⁶ Mt. xiii. 21; Mk. iv. 16, 18, 20; xvi. 20; Lk. vi.; viii. 11, 15, 21; xi. 28; Jo. xii. 44-8; xiv. 24.

⁷ *ib.* iv. 23; ix. 35; Mk. i. 14; Lk. xx. 1.

⁸ *ib.* xxviii. 19; Mk. xvi. 15; Lk. ix. 1-6.

During the life-time of Jesus, the Jews alone were evangelized.¹ He arranged, however, that the good tidings should be subsequently announced to all men.

This is important. Many modern critics, with Harnack,² hold that the call of the gentiles was neither foreseen nor intended by Jesus. When the disciples requested Him to deal with the Syro-Phœnician woman, He refused on the grounds that He was sent only "to the sheep that were lost of the house of Israel."³ In going into the way of the gentiles, the apostles acted against His express commands: "Go ye not into the way of the gentiles," He said, "but go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁴ He even announced, that the apocalyptic era would be ushered in before they should have completed the evangelization of the Jews: "Amen I say to you: you shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the Son of Man come."⁵ The apostles would thus be judges, not of the race, but only of the twelve tribes.⁶ Hence, according to the critics, the *really orthodox* party in the primitive church—the Judaisers—disappeared in the struggle for exist-

¹ Only on two occasions do we find Jesus concerning Himself with the uncircumcised—Mt. viii. 5-10; xv. 23-28.

² *What is Christianity?* pp. 182, 183; *Mission*, vol. i, pp. 36-43.

³ Mt. xv. 24.

⁵ *ib.* x. 23.

⁴ *ib.* x. 5.

⁶ *ib.* xix. 28.

ence. "Crushed by the letter of Jesus they died a lingering death." ¹

And yet universalism is deep-down in the teaching of the Galilean Prophet.² This is certain. Were we even to set aside the narrative of St. John, the historicity of which is flouted by the critics, the synoptics alone would put it beyond question that Jesus intended that His kingdom should be world-wide.

The Precursor was for expansion. He predicted the call of the gentiles: "Seeing many of the Pharisees and Saducees coming to his baptism he said to them: Ye brood of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth fruit worthy of penance. And think not to say within yourselves: we have Abraham for our father; for I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. For now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that doth not yield good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire."³ No word here of nationalism.

His Master's horizon is equally boundless. The sermon on the Mount has to do, not with Jews only, but with men, and, therefore, with all men. Jesus comes to cast fire, not upon Palestine, but

¹ Harnack: *Mission*, vol. i, p. 64.

² Mt. viii. 11, 12; xiii. 31-33, 37, 38; xxi. 31; xxviii. 18; Lk. xiii. 28, 29; Mk. xvi. 15, etc.

³ *ib.* iii. 7-10. The Baptist preached to publicans and to soldiers (Lk. iii. 12-14).

upon *the earth*.¹ His disciples are the salt of *the earth*, the light of *the world*. The woman's kindness in anointing Him at Bethany would be told throughout *the whole world* wheresoever the gospel should be preached.²

Jesus o'ersteps Judaïsm. He "calls to everyone who bears a human face." He finds God's children everywhere. His personal mission is properly confined to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and yet He occasionally addresses Himself to outsiders.³ He proclaims Himself the Christ foretold by Isaias; the Christ whose kingdom would be inundated by gentiles. Harnack himself admits that Jesus was conscious of being the Messiah.⁴ He admits, too, that the Christ of prophecy was to be a world-king: "In the two centuries before Christ," he writes, "the extension of their historical horizon strengthened the interest of the Jews in the nations of the world, introduced the notion of mankind as a whole, and brought it within the sphere of the unexpected end, including therefore the operations of the Messiah. The day of judgment is regarded as extending to the whole world, and the Messiah not only as judging the world, but as ruling it as well."⁵

Finally, the parables are saturated with universalism. When the disciples asked Jesus to

¹ *ib.* v. 13, 14.

³ Mt. viii. 5, 13; xv. 24, 28.

² Mk. xiv. 9.

⁴ *v. supra.*

⁵ *What is Christianity?* p. 136.

explain to them the parable of the cockle, "He made answer and said to them : ' He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. And the field is *the world*.'"¹ Equally catholic are the parables of the wicked husbandmen, the marriage-feast and the mustard-seed.

I am aware, of course, that modern critics question the genuineness of those *logia* of Jesus, which savour of universalism ; ² but what is left of the gospel-fabric when all such passages have been excised ? If Jesus did not proclaim Himself the Christ foretold by Isaias, and if the " good-tiding " was not intended by Him to be a world-message, we may burn not only the fourth gospel,³ but the synoptics as well. They are not history.

The texts cited by Harnack to show that Jesus was not conscious of being a world-saviour create little real difficulty. Christ's personal mission was confined to the Jews. In this sense, it was true to

¹ Mt. xiii. 37, 38.

² Especially Mt. xxviii. 19 ; Mk. xvi. 15 ; xiv. 9. *cfr.* Harnack : *Mission*, vol. i, pp. 36 *sqq.*

³ That St. John's Gospel is thoroughly Catholic in tone is not questioned. Harnack admits that " as a whole the fourth gospel is saturated with statements of a directly universalistic character " (*ib.*, p. 42). For St. John Jesus is a world-saviour ; He is the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of *the world* (i. 29) ; all men irrespective of nationality are drawn to the crucified Redeemer (xii. 31) ; whosoever believeth in Him (πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων) hath life everlasting (iii. 14, 15) ; the law of the central sanctuary will be abrogated ; Christ has other sheep besides those of the fold of Israel (iv. 21 ; x. 16).

say that He had been sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But He made it clear that, at a later period, the gentiles, too, would be called to the faith. "Suffer *first* (πρῶτον) the children to be filled," He said.¹ The dogs would be filled subsequently.

When He sent His disciples on what may be called their apprentice-mission, He forbade them to go "into the way of the gentiles;" but during the risen life He commissioned them to evangelize the whole world.² Even before He entered upon His passion, He told them that His gospel would be preached *in the whole world* for a testimony to *all nations*, and then would come the final consummation.³ Hence when He announced that they should not have finished the cities of Israel till the Son of Man came, He was not speaking of His coming at the end of the world. The inauguration of the apocalyptic kingdom was a long way off.

* * *

Invisible Unity of the Kingdom.—To be saved, to become a citizen of the kingdom, belief in the gospel had to be accompanied by repentance.⁴ Christ, like the Precursor, began His public ministry by preaching penance. "The time is

¹ "The πρῶτον of Mark vii. 27 is not to be pressed"! (Harnack: *Mission*, vol. i, p. 39 n).

² Mt. xxviii. 19; Mk. xvi. 15; *cfr. ib.* xiv. 9.

³ Mt. xxiv. 14.

⁴ (μετάνοια) Mt. iv. 17; Mk. i. 15; Lk. v. 32.

accomplished," He said "and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the gospel."¹ . . . "Except you do penance you shall all likewise perish."² Christ's mission was to call sinners to repentance.³ It was also the mission of those whom He sent.⁴

All men are invited to enter the kingdom. But not all accept the invitation. Those who "repent and believe" are cleansed from sin and sanctified.⁵ Their sanctity, however, is amissible. Even citizens of the kingdom may be lost. It is only those who persevere to the end who shall be saved.⁶

Despite opposition from many quarters, from demons, from Scribes and Pharisees, Christ's kingdom shall increase, its growth and development being due entirely to the unseen influence of divine grace.⁷ Christ Himself is the sole source of all sanctity in His kingdom. The Son of God was sanctified and sent into the world⁸ that He might sanctify and save others.

We are saved *by becoming united to Jesus*. This is the root-idea in the soteriology of St. John. Jesus is the Word made flesh *full of* (πλήρης) *grace*

¹ Mk. i. 15.

² Lk. xiii. 3; *cfr.* Mt. xi. 20-22.

³ Mt. ix. 13; Mk. ii. 17; Lk. v. 32.

⁴ Mk. vi. 12.

⁵ Jo. xvii. 17; *cfr.* Acts xx. 32; Rom. xv. 16.

⁶ Mt. xxiv. 13; Mk. xiii. 13.

⁷ Mk. iv. 26-29.

⁸ Jo. x. 36.

*and truth.*¹ We are saved *by receiving of His fulness* (πλήρωμα).² He is a living Vine. We constitute the branches. Those who become united to Him form with Him a mystic organism. Its vital principle is the invisible sap which, emanating from the fulness of the Vine, permeates and quickens the branches. To become detached from the Vine-stock is to die ;³ Christ is our Life.

Christians are thus bound together by many inward or invisible ties. They have a common faith. All who "believe" accept the same truths⁴ on the same divine authority, and do so for a common end or purpose—eternal salvation. This end they hope to attain through the same Jesus Christ Who is the sole source of sanctification and salvation for all. Finally, those of His disciples

¹ Jo. i. 14.

² *ib.* v. 16.

³ *ib.* xv. 1-6.

⁴ The central tenets of primitive Christianity seem to have been :

- (a) That Jesus was the Son of God (*cfr.* Ac. viii. 37).
- (b) That He died for our sins.
- (c) That He rose again.

The expectation of Christ's speedy return was, we believe, general in the primitive church even among the immediate disciples. Let this not shock us. The Master had spoken mysteriously of the end of things. Sometimes He seemed to imply that the final consummation was at hand (*cfr.* Mt. x. 23 ; xvi. 27, 28 ; xxiv. 34 ; Mk. viii. 39 ; xiii. 30 ; Lk. ix. 26, 27 ; xxi. 31), at other times that it was afar off (*cfr.* Mt. xiii. 31, 32 ; xxiv. 14, 48-50 ; xxv. 5-14 ; Mk. xiii. 10). In His wisdom He left the ignorance and doubts of His disciples to be dispelled by experience and by subsequent revelation.

who "abide in Him" are, through Him, united to each other by the invisible bond of grace.

Invisible Unity Visibly Manifest.—When about to enter upon His passion, Jesus prayed for His apostles that the Father might keep them in His name, that they might *be one*. "And not for them only do I pray," He continued, "but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me, *that they all may be one in Us*, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."¹

There is question here of a unity which is at once visible and invisible. Invisible in itself, it is visible in some of its effects. Its principle is grace, which unites us to God and to each other. It is the unity of the Vine.

This invisible unity has a visible counterpart. The inward union through grace is outwardly manifest. If Christians "remained in Christ"—if they loved God and one another as they should, the visible manifestation of their inward union would, of itself, suffice to convince unbelievers of the divinity of Christ's mission. In the passage cited, our Lord prayed that all His followers might have one mind and one heart, and that this inward union might find expression in outward peace and concord. We need scarcely add that sin has robbed Christ's sublime prayer of its full efficacy.²

¹ Jo. xvii. 20 *sqq.*

² Mr. Rhodes' interpretation of the passage is far-fetched. He argues: Christ prays that all who believe in Him may be

This outward manifestation of the life of the spirit is the sole principle of visible unity claimed by Dr. Lindsay for the church as a whole.¹ And yet he concedes that Christians form together a *visible unit* "which is a *society*, and which, like every form of *corporate social existence*, must be possessed of powers of oversight and discipline to be exercised upon its members."² Language of this sort on the lips of one who is avowedly opposed to external organization as a principle of the church's visible unity, is, to say the least, somewhat strange.

* * *

The Kingdom a Visible Society.—Followers of Christ are not to live in religious isolation. The kingdom is a society. Repentance and faith do not suffice to save us. All who believe are constrained to go through an external rite of initiation. Baptism is the only door by which the new kingdom

visibly as well as invisibly one. But it is inconceivable, it would be blasphemy to say, that Christ's "strong cry" has fallen short of its full effect. Hence all who believe in Him "aright" are to-day visibly one. But the argument is really weak. The "inconceivable" has, alas! occurred. Christ's prayer has, in fact, failed to secure visible unity among all those who, through the word of the apostles, have believed in Him. This is not blasphemy. He prayed similarly for invisible unity through the habit of charity, and yet all Christians are not saints. Mr. Rhodes confounds Christianity *de iure* with Christianity *de facto* (cfr. Rhodes: *The Visible Unity of the Church*, vol. i, pp. 8-14).

¹ cfr. Appendix B.

² *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 25.

can be entered. Such was Christ's personal arrangement.¹ He also instituted the Eucharist.² He arranged that His followers should come together occasionally and "break the bread" (*ὁ ἄρτος*)³ in memory of Him; Eucharistic meetings would be a characteristic of the kingdom. All this foreshadows organization.⁴ An exercise of external authority is required to convene a meeting effectively and control its proceedings.⁵

For Christians a special efficacy attaches to congregational prayer. "If two of you," said Christ, "shall consent upon earth concerning anything whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by My Father Who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name there I am in the midst of them."⁶ Dr. Dale finds in these words "the most impressive sanction to the organization of Christian societies for purposes of prayer and worship."⁷ Harnack regards them as an invitation to Christians to form concrete

¹ Jo. iii. 5; Mt. xxviii. 19.

² Mt. xxvi. 26; Mk. xiv. 22; Lk. xxii. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 24.

³ *cfr.* Ac. ii. 42.

⁴ From the *oneness* of baptism and of the Eucharist we cannot, strictly speaking, argue to the visible unity of the Church. The Jews of the dispersion had the same rites of initiation and of cult, and yet did not constitute one external society.

⁵ More especially if the Eucharistic service would be held regularly.

⁶ Mt. xviii. 19, 20.

⁷ *op. cit.*, p. 12.

associations. "It follows," he says, "that to associate is, for those who bear the name of Christ, not a secondary or unessential feature in the idea of the Church; it is a feature essentially involved in the idea itself which is only realized through the fact of the faithful thus associating themselves."¹

Christ's followers in each district would form a distinct society. "If thy brother shall offend against thee," He said, "go and rebuke him between him and thee alone . . . and if he will not hear thee take with thee one or two more . . . and if he will not hear them, *tell the Church*, and if he will not hear the Church let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."² The Greek word *ἐκκλησία* signifies an assembly and connotes external organization.³ On the lips of Jesus the term has its ordinary signification. The *ἐκκλησία* referred to in the passage cited is an *approachable* body which *authoritatively adjusts differences between its members*. It is therefore at once *visible* and *organic*. It is a society.

Christ arranged that the local associations should form together one organic whole. There would be a Church of churches.⁴ His followers wherever

¹ v. *apud* Bat.: *op. cit.*, pp. 19, 20. ² Mt. xviii. 15-17.

³ v. *supra*.

⁴ Mt. xvi. 18. Dr. Lindsay (*op. cit.*, p. 16) finds in the word *ἐκκλησία* a suggestion of *visible unity*, but is it not equally suggestive of *visible organic unity*?

resident would constitute one fold,¹ one society. As if anticipating the danger of a number of separate and independent flocks, He expressly states that for His sheep there will be one flock and one only.²

GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM

St. Luke relates that, after a whole night spent in prayer, Jesus at daybreak called unto Him His disciples, and from them chose twelve whom He named *apostles*.³ So important was this incident in the eyes of the evangelists that all four refer to it.⁴ During the remainder of His public life the Twelve formed around the Master a select and exclusive circle. They were trained and instructed by Him with the greatest care. They were specially enlightened by Him on doctrines obscurely proposed to the multitudes. They were His privileged friends. To the last, with one exception, they remained true to Him; and after the resurrection the apostolic circle reassembled around

¹ Or rather "flock" (*ποιμνῇ*). "It should be remarked," writes Dr. Gore, "that Christ did not, strictly, speak of *one fold*, but of *one flock*. . . . This is worth notice . . ."; on which we remark that the change in term is scarcely worth notice from a controversial view-point, seeing that the term "flock" no less than "fold" connotes external organization (Jo. x. 16. *cfr.* MacRory *in loc.*).

² *ib.*

³ Lk. vi. 12-13.

⁴ Mt. x. 1; Mk. iii. 13, 14; Lk. *loc. cit.*; Jo. vi. 71.

the risen Master. During the forty days, which intervened between the resurrection and the ascension, Christ appeared frequently to His apostles and spoke to them concerning the kingdom.¹

As to His purpose in selecting and segregating the Twelve there can be no question. The gospels make it clear that they were chosen to be *preachers of the word* and *rulers of the faithful*. The apostolic office was two-fold. From the first moment of their call Christ gave them to understand that they were to be official exponents of the gospel. St. Matthew, having mentioned the call of the apostles and recorded their names in order, proceeds at once to relate that: "these twelve Jesus sent commanding them . . . to preach, saying: the kingdom of heaven is at hand."² The risen Christ was equally explicit. Addressing the apostles "whom He had chosen" in words already quoted, He told them that, having received the Holy Ghost, they would be witnesses unto Him throughout the world.³ Finally, the teaching character of the apostolic office is clearly implied in the terms of their formal commission. "Going therefore teach ye all nations⁴ . . . go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature."⁵

St. Mark informs us that on one occasion Jesus,

¹ Ac. i. 2, 3.

³ Ac. i. 2-8.

² Mt. x. 1-7.

⁴ Mt. xxviii. 19.

⁵ Mk. xvi. 15.

sitting down, called unto Him the Twelve. Then, taking a little child, He set it in their midst, and, pointing to it as a model of humility, delivered to His ambitious disciples a salutary lecture.¹ Following St. Matthew's summary of Christ's discourse on this occasion, we find that, having spoken successively on the subjects of humility, scandal-giving, fraternal correction, and the obligation of occasionally invoking ecclesiastical authority to check a wayward brother, He proceeded, still addressing the Twelve,² to make an important pronouncement concerning the future standing of the apostles in His kingdom. "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth," He said, "shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven."³ The metaphor needs no elucidation. The apostles will be the authoritative rulers of the kingdom. To *bind* signifies to impose an obligation,⁴ as to *loose* signifies its removal.

The promise was fulfilled by the risen Christ. On Easter Sunday evening He solemnly conferred upon them the power to remit and to retain sin *by judicial sentence*. "As the Father hath sent Me," He said, "I also send you. And when He had said

¹ Mk. ix. 33. *sqq.*

² Dr. Lindsay admits this as "*probable*" (*op. cit.*, p. 229).

³ Mk. xviii. 18. Dr. Lindsay states that the promise here as in Mt. xvi. 13-19 is strictly conditional (*v. infra*).

⁴ Lat. *ligare*—'to impose an obligation.'

this, He breathed on them and said: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.”¹ Later He invested them with His own God-given authority to shepherd the entire church: “All power is given Me,” He said, “in heaven and on earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”² The Twelve will teach and rule with the authority of the Master.³

THE PRIMACY

Pursuing our inquiry we find that one member of the apostolic body was singled out by Christ for special attention. This was Simon, the leader (*ὁ πρῶτος*)⁴ of the Twelve.

His pre-eminence is now generally admitted. In the New Testament he throws his fellow-apostles completely into the shade. He is first everywhere.⁵ He towers above the other members of the apostolic college as their acknowledged chief and represen-

¹ Gr. κρατῆτε, κεκράτηνται. *Κρίνειν* implies a judicial process (*cfr.* Lidd. and Sc.).

² Mt. xxviii. 19, 20.

³ Lk. x. 16.

⁴ Mt. x. 2.

⁵ Mt. xiv. 28; xvi. 22; xxvi. 58; Mk. viii. 32; xiv. 29, 54; Lk. v. 8; xxii. 34, 54; Jo. xiii. 9, 37; xviii. 15.

tative.¹ One of the three specially favoured disciples, he figures as the recognized leader and spokesman of even this select group.² Alone of the disciples he had his name changed by Jesus.³

In the New Testament Simon's name is found mentioned along with others in about thirty cases. In every instance, except one, it holds the place of honour. Paul writing to the Galatians and referring to the apostles, whom he had seen in Jerusalem, names them, as I think, in the order in which he had met them: "James, Cephas, and John." But so strange did the order of enumeration here appear to the early fathers, that quite a number,⁴ quoting the passage, read it: "Cephas, James, and John." This is also the reading found in four of the Uncial MSS.⁵

The prominence given to Peter's name by all the sacred writers is made light of by Protestant apologists; some explaining that he was senior

¹ Mt. xv. 15; xvi. 16; xvii. 26; xviii. 21; xix. 27; Mk. x. 28; xi. 21; Lk. xii. 41; xviii. 28; Jo. vi. 69; xviii. 11.

² Mt. xvii. 4; Mk. xiv. 37.

³ Jo. i. 41 *sqq.* We are aware, of course, that He called James and John *Boanerges* ("sons of thunder") (Mk. iii. 17) just as he spoke of Herod as a *fox* (Lk. xiii. 32); but in those cases there was no question of a *formal change* of name.

⁴ Iren., Tert., Greg. of Nyss., Jerome, Ambrose, Aug.

⁵ D, E, F, G. (*cfr.* Chapman: *Bishop Gore and Catholic Claims*, pp. 45 *sqq.*).

apostle, others that he was recognized to be the Master's favourite, others again that he was the first to follow Jesus. All three explanations are unsatisfactory. There is no evidence to show that Peter was the senior member of the apostolic college; on the contrary, there is reason to believe that he was junior in years to his brother Andrew.¹ As to the other explanations suggested, the Master's favourite disciple was not Simon son of Jona, but John son of Zebedee—"the disciple whom Jesus loved;" while His earliest disciple was not Simon, but either his brother Andrew or John the Evangelist.

Andrew and John were Christ's first disciples. They followed Him as a result of the Baptist's preaching. Andrew then sought out his brother Simon and, informing him that he had found the Messias, brought him to Jesus. "And Jesus, looking upon him, said: "Thou art Simon son of Jona; thou shalt be called *Rock* (cephas)." ²

The Old Testament represents the father of the Jews as having had his name divinely changed, when he was about to be constituted the juridical head of God's faithful people, the new name suggesting the dignity to which he was about to be raised.³ May we suppose that the change in Simon's name implied that he, too, was to be raised

¹ Epiphan.: *Haer.* li. 17.

² Jo. i. 41 *sqq.*

³ Gen. xvii. 5, 15.

to some dignity signified by his new name "Rock"? We shall see.

In Matthew xvi it is related that Jesus, having come into the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi,¹ asked his disciples saying: '*Who do men say that the Son of Man is*'?

But they said: '*Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias and others Jeremias or one of the prophets.*'

Jesus said to them: '*But who do you (plural) say that I am*'?

Simon Peter answered and said: '*Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.*'²

And Jesus answering said to him: '*Blessed art thou (singular) Simon son of Jona because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee but My Father Who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.*'³

Simon the Rock-foundation.—The English translation of this celebrated passage obscures the meaning somewhat. In Aramaic (the original) the same word 'Cephas' would stand for 'Peter' and

¹ The Galilean ministry was then drawing to a close.

² Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.

³ Mt. xvi. 13-19.

for 'Rock,' so that the passage as spoken by Jesus would translate: "*Thou art Rock and upon this rock I will build My Church,*" where the apostle addressed is manifestly the rock-foundation. Other translations are more faithful to the original than is our English:

In Latin the passage reads: "*Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram*" . . . ,

in Greek: "*Σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ. . .*," ("Thou art Rock and upon this very rock" . . .),

and in French: "*Tu es Pierre et sur cette pierre*" . . . , where, as in the original, the words for "Peter" and for "rock" are identical in form. The reader can see at once that Simon is the rock upon which Christ promises to build His Church.

For centuries this obvious conclusion was boldly questioned by Protestant controversialists. The rock, they contended, was not Peter, but Peter's faith, or perhaps Christ Himself. We are spared the trouble of examining this extraordinary position as it has been, at length, abandoned by its intrepid defenders: "It is difficult, I think," writes Dr. Gore, "to feel any doubt that our Lord is here pronouncing Peter to be the rock."¹

Simon alone the Rock-foundation.—Christ begins by addressing the Twelve collectively: "Who do

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 76.

you (plural) say that I am " ? Simon, replying for himself or for all, confesses His divine sonship. Christ proceeds : " Blessed art *thou* Simon . . . and I say to *thee* that *thou* art Peter . . ." The change from the plural (*you*) to the singular (*thou*, *thee*) shows that in the latter part of the quotation Christ no longer addresses the Twelve but one of their number.

He implies, moreover, that He addresses him *as distinct from the others*, and not merely as their representative. Simon, we know, frequently acted and was frequently addressed as representing the apostolic college. But on the occasion in question it was not so. " Blessed art thou," said Christ, " *Simon son of Jona* . . . and I say to thee that thou art Rock and upon *this very rock*¹ I will build My Church." The addition of the words " son of Jona " and the form of expression throughout seem to put it beyond question that Christ is here dealing with Simon, not as representing the Twelve, but as distinct from them.

Let us endeavour to construct a parallel passage and consider its import. An eminent philosopher decides upon establishing a society to preserve and propagate his teaching. Taking aside twelve of his best disciples, he asks them what do men generally think of him. They reply that public opinion is somewhat divided as to his character and worth. Then comes the pointed question :

¹ *cfr. Gr. supra.*

“But what do *you* think of me?” One of the group, a man named George, let us say, replies, speaking of his master in terms of the highest praise. The master thereupon addresses his forward disciple: “Blessed art thou,” he says, “George, son of Henry, for thou hast been divinely enlightened as to my true character; and I say to thee that thou art the intellect of my school, and *upon this very intellect* I will build my society.” In this imaginary case, can it be doubted that George is addressed and eulogized *as distinct from his companions*?

We find it difficult to sympathize with Dr. Gore in his remarks on the words of promise. “St. Peter,” he writes, “speaks as one of a body of twelve. Is Christ dealing with him as distinct from the others, or as their representative? Is the office to belong to him only, or in a special sense, or is it to be given to all who share the apostolic commission? . . . We contend that this is just one of those passages which want interpreting,—one of those passages about the meaning of which it is not possible to arrive at any certainty without the aid of the interpretation . . . of Scripture itself or of the Church.”¹ We hope the reader will find it not only “possible” but easy to interpret the passage, without external assistance of any kind.

Dr. Lindsay’s interpretation is even more un-

¹ *Roman Catholic Claims*, p. 77.

satisfactory. "Our Lord," he writes, "had asked a question of all His disciples. Peter, answering impetuously in their name, made himself their representative. His answer was an adoring confession . . . which contained, in germ, all the future confessions of the Church of Christ, and which made him the spokesman for the mighty multitude . . . who were to make the same confession. . . . It was to Peter who answered as representing the Twelve, to Peter, who was the spokesman for countless thousands of the faithful, who down through the march of time make the same glad confession, that the promise was given." ¹

Simon is solemnly assured by Christ that he will be constituted the principle of stability, the rock-foundation of the entire church. The promise is made him in his individual capacity. Hence it does not surprise us to learn that Christ on a subsequent occasion prayed for Simon that he might *confirm his fellow-apostles*,² and that, later still, He pointedly singled him out from the others, when about to fulfil the promise, the text of which we are now considering.³

IMPORT OF THE PROMISE

The Rock-foundation.—Christ promised to make Simon the rock-foundation of His Church. "Thou art Rock," He said, "and upon this very rock I

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 26. ² Lk. xxii. 29-32. ³ Jo. xxi. 15 *sqq.*

will build My Church ; and the power of death¹ shall not prevail against her ; ”—words which at once recall the parable of the wise man who built his house upon a rock : “ And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell not, because it was founded on a rock.”² Peter will be to the Church what the rock-foundation was to the house of the wise man. Through him the Church will be for ever immune from disruption and dissolution. He will constitute *her primary principle of unity and stability*.

What does this imply ? Christ, we have seen, intended that His kingdom should be a society of societies, a Church of churches. We found, moreover,³ that the primary principle of unity and stability in a society is *its central authority*. It follows that when Christ promised to make Simon the rock-foundation of His entire Church—her principle of unity and stability—He equivalently promised to invest him with supreme authority to rule all Christians.

Even his fellow-apostles will be subject to him. At the last supper, addressing the Twelve collectively, Christ tells them that He disposes or appoints to them a kingdom. Then, singling out

¹ Probably the best rendering of the original *πύλαι ᾗδου*.

² Mt. vii. 25. Here as in Mt. xvi. 18, the English ‘rock’ represents an original *πέτρα*.

³ *cfr.* ch. i.

Simon, He proceeds to address him as distinct from the others. "Simon, Simon," He said, "behold Satan hath desired to have *you* (plural) that he might sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for *thee* (singular) that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, *confirm thy brethren.*"¹ Simon is, therefore, to confirm not alone the faithful, but his fellow-apostles. He alone is the rock-foundation of the Church. When others are named with him as the foundation,² we understand that he and they act as foundation in different capacities. *They* are so many foundation-stones supporting the Church, indeed, but themselves in turn resting upon and "confirmed" by the bed-rock which underlies and supports the whole.

The Keys of the Kingdom. . . .—"And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." In our introductory chapter referring to some recognized symbols of authority, we discussed the symbolism of the keys. We can, therefore, afford to be brief here. Christ, having promised to make Simon the rock-foundation of His Church, goes on to promise him "the keys of the kingdom." The kingdom is the Church Universal—a visible society. The keys of the kingdom symbolize supreme ecclesiastical authority. Christ, therefore, speaking

¹ Lk. xxii. 29-32.

² *cfr.* Eph. ii. 20.

symbolically, promises to constitute Simon Peter supreme ruler of His Church.¹

The Power of Binding and Loosing. . . .—“ And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.” The metaphor of binding and loosing we have also explained. It signifies external legislative authority. The universal jurisdiction here promised to Simon in his individual capacity was, we have seen, subsequently promised to the Twelve collectively.²

* * *

St. Matthew's Gospel, Ecclesiastical.—There is a growing tendency among the critics to admit that the Catholic doctrine is contained in Matthew xvi. It would be a mistake, however—so they tell us—to infer that Christianity is, therefore, *de iure* a church, or at least a permanent church.

These men explain that an impassable chasm separates the apostles from the Master.³ Jesus

¹ Dr. Lindsay, while holding that Peter, and “*those whom he represented*” are here promised the power to let in and keep out from the household of the faithful, argues that the ratification of the exercise of the power *depends on its Christ-like use*. It is only when He shuts out that there is any real exclusion. When He lets in there can be no exclusion (*op. cit.* pp. 26, 27).

² Mt. xviii. 18.

³ Harnack: in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* for 16th Jan., 1909; *cfr.* *What is Christianity?* pp. 181–183.

was the victim of a tragic illusion. The end of the world He believed to be imminent.¹ A cosmic catastrophe was at hand which would usher in a glorious Messianic era. "The kingdom" was therefore not "of this world," but apocalyptic; and the Jews were to prepare for it by repenting and believing the gospel. Jesus did not establish a society, nor did He intend that His followers should do so. The Galilean Prophet had no ecclesiology.

The birth of the church, we are informed, was brought about by the force of subsequent events. After the death of Jesus, the new fraternity took shape "automatically," as a society, in expectation of the parousia. The disciples began by preaching the kingdom to the Jews. These for the most part refused to give ear. As a result the Christian fellowship became estranged from the synagogue; and the new preachers, despairing of success among the Jews, finally took upon themselves to "save" the gentiles. The organization which came into being in this way was the church. It was conceived to be the kingdom itself, when the disciples at length realized that their Master had been mistaken as to the speedy inauguration of the apocalyptic era.

Such is Harnack's theory. Loisy felt that to make it square with even the substance of the

¹ *Mission*, vol. i, p. 36; *What is Christianity?* p. 125.

synoptic narrative, it required recasting. He is, therefore, prepared to concede that Christ founded a society of Jews in preparation for the eschatological kingdom, which He believed to be imminent. This society He subjected to the apostles, setting up Peter as primate. The new organization He intended to be short-lived. It would disappear in the approaching débâcle, its members passing over into the apocalyptic kingdom. This temporary society was conceived as a permanent church, when the disciples had come to recognize that the kingdom announced by the Master had failed to appear. What was established as a transitory organization became in this way a fixture.

The passage Matthew xvi. 16-18, the critics tell us, is condemned as intrusive by all the rules of historical criticism.¹ It is not of a piece with the general fabric of the first gospel. In addition, it is found in Matthew alone of the Evangelists, and seems to have been completely discredited by the early fathers.² Finally, the word ἐκκλησία, applied to the kingdom, is Pauline. It is met with 110 times within the New Testament, and of these 86 occur in the epistles of St. Paul and in the Acts of the Apostles.³

¹ Harnack : *Entstehung*, p. 3.

² It is commonly alleged that the passage is quoted for the first time by Tert. (*De pud.* xxii), and by Origen (*Eus. H. E* vi. 25, 8).

³ *cfr.* Lindsay, : *op. cit.*, p. 5.

Batiffol has written a whole book¹ to show that the kingdom preached by Jesus is not exclusively apocalyptic. Partly apocalyptic it was, of course, and, as such, comprised only the just.² The kingdom, however, was realized on earth as well, and under the latter phase was established, *in actu*, during the life-time of Jesus.³ With Him it had come (ἐφθασεν).⁴

The general fabric of the first gospel is thoroughly ecclesiastical. The conception and formation of the kingdom as a visible society, and the selection and training of the Twelve as its prospective pastors, form an integral, nay, an essential portion of St. Matthew's narrative. In the first gospel, too, we find reference to the institution by Jesus of Baptism and of the Eucharist, to punishment by excommunication,⁵ and to the church as an organization which is capable of adjudicating between disputants.⁶

The parables recorded by St. Matthew are impregnated with ecclesiasticism. Those of the cockle,⁷ of the marriage-feast⁸ and of the ten virgins are found in his gospel. The kingdom was a kingdom of justice,⁹ and yet all its citizens are not just. The parables cited represent it as being an earthly assemblage of good men and bad,—

¹ *Enseignement de Jésus* (Bat.).

² Mt. xiii. 43 ; xxv. 34, 41.

³ Lk. xvii. 20, 21.

⁴ Mt. xii. 28.

⁵ *ib.* xviii. 17.

⁶ *ib.*

⁷ *ib.* xiii.

⁸ *ib.* xxii.

⁹ *ib.* xxv.

sinners and saints being suffered to associate together until the end, when the wicked shall go into everlasting fire, the just into life eternal. We should add that the ecclesiastical character of the first gospel is attested by critics of the standing of Jülicher and Wellhausen—to whom Harnack himself refers as being “the most important historian of religion in our day.”¹

On the question of genuineness we remark as follows:—The word *ἐκκλησία* was well known to Christ’s contemporaries, Greek as well as Jew. This we have already shown.² Hence the term would have been quite familiar to Him, even as man. We note, besides, that the word occurs in the speech delivered by St. Stephen before the council,³ and its use in Galatians i. 13, suggests that, even antecedently to Paul’s conversion, Christians were spoken of as constituting an *ἐκκλησία*. On purely critical grounds, therefore, we are justified in tracing the term back to Jesus. We may add that the same Evangelist in another place represents Him as employing the term to designate the local community.⁴ Is this *logion*, too, to be discarded?

That the words of promise are recorded by Matthew alone of the evangelists is an interesting fact,

¹ *cfr. What is Christianity?* p. 180; *cfr. Bat. : op. cit.* introd., pp. xii, xiii.

² *v. supra*, ch. ii.

³ Ac. vii. 38.

⁴ Mt. xviii. 17.

no doubt, but what is the force of the argument based upon it? If we are prepared to throw overboard all passages in the gospels which are recorded by one evangelist only, we shall have disposed of a very considerable portion of the synoptic narrative.

That the passage is quoted for the first time by Tertullian and by Origen is simply untrue. We find it *entire* in the Diatessaron,¹ while verse 17 is quoted by Justin Martyr² and by Irenaeus.³ Finally, if the passage in Matthew be interpolated, how do the critics account for the fact that the MSS. have recorded it with such a complete lack of hesitancy?⁴

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

Christ, during His public life, ruled His disciples in person. Those who "believed" became His subjects. They were His little flock;⁵ He was their Shepherd. When about to go to the Father, He arranged that His sheep should not suffer by His departure. He appointed a vicar to take His place as pastor of the entire flock. The vicar was Simon Peter.

The appointment took place on the shores of the lake of Galilee. Seven members of the apostolic college had just breakfasted in company with the risen Christ. Of the number was Simon. The

¹ Compiled *circ.* 180. ² *Dial.*, c. 100. ³ *Adv. Haer.* xviii. 8. 4.

⁴ *cfr.* Tischendorf: *Nov. Test. Gr.* vol. i. p. 95. Wright: *Syn. of Gosp. in Gr.* p. 266. ⁵ Lk. xii. 32.

meal concluded, a memorable scene was enacted. Pointedly and solemnly singling him out from his six companions, Christ addressed the son of Jona: "Simon, son of Jona," He asked, "lovest thou Me *more than these?*" And Simon, his soul tortured by the memory of his recent fall, made answer sorrowfully: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus said to him: "Feed my lambs." Solemnly the question was repeated: "Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou Me?" and the same reply: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Christ said to him: "Shepherd my sheep."¹ A third time his Master repeated the self same question, now in an accent of deep tenderness:² "Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou Me." "Lord," said Simon, "Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus said to him: "Feed my sheep."³

Comment upon this passage is uncalled for. The meaning is obvious. Christ, having singled out Simon from his fellows, appoints him, *as distinct from them*, His vicar to shepherd His lambs and His sheep. Other shepherds will, of course, be required to aid in tending the flock. Some of these may even hold their pastoral com-

¹ ποιμαίνει τὰ πρόβατά μου (Jo. xxi. 16).

² Christ in putting the question a third time uses a new word for "lovest." Before it was ἀγαπᾷς (diligis), now it is a word more expressive of tenderness: φιλεῖς (amas). Simon in his replies uses φιλῶ throughout—never ἀγαπῶ.

³ Jo. xxi. 15 *sqq.*

missions directly from the Master. But all other shepherds, of whatever rank, must tend their respective flocks in a strictly subordinate capacity ; all being subjected by Christ to the one supreme pastor to whom alone He addressed the words : " Shepherd My sheep."

Ecclesiastical Hierarchy Enduring.—The pastoral authority conferred on St. Peter and on the other apostles would not lapse at their death ; they would have successors in the ministry. Christ's Church would endure for all time.¹ The task allotted the apostles could not be carried out by them personally. They could not preach the Gospel to all nations, nor rule His kingdom to the end. The pastoral authority bestowed upon them was, therefore, to be transmitted by them to a line of successors, who would shepherd the Christian flock to the end of time.

Schism Never Lawful.—The teaching of Jesus on the morality of schism is not far to seek. His Church is essentially an organic unit. His followers constitute *one* society, *one* city,² *one* fold,³ *one* kingdom,⁴ Division is sinful and disastrous : " Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." ⁵

Christians have been subjected by Him to a

¹ Mt. xxviii. 20.

³ Jo. x. 16 ; xxi. 15 *sqq.*

² *ib.* v. 14.

⁴ *v. supra.*

⁵ Mt. xii. 25 ; *cfr.* 1 Tim. iii. 15.

single central government. This arrangement was permanent.¹ "Thou art Peter," He said, "and upon this Rock I will build My Church and the power of death shall not prevail against her." Confirmed by her rock-foundation His Church will endure to the end immune from dissolution. To remain seated on the rock is vital for the Church and for every member of the Church. Schism is suicidal.

Christ preached a gospel which is at once doctrinal and disciplinary. This gospel is the same for all, and is authoritative. We have already remarked on the absolute character of His personal teaching. "His word was the power of God." Equally authoritative is the voice of His apostles and of their successors. They teach and rule by right divine. "All power," said Christ, "is given to Me in heaven and on earth."² In virtue of this power, He sent forth the Twelve, "as the Father had sent Him:"³ "Going, therefore," He said, "teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to

¹ Harnack speaks of "the high privilege of the Christian religion to adapt its shape to the course of history" (*What is Christianity?* p. 99), and of "the freedom to form church communities and to arrange for public worship and discipline" (*ib.*, p. 190). Christ's teaching, he holds, concerns itself only with the inner life of the spirit and summarily confronts every man with his God" (*What is Christianity?* p. 187). Jesus was careless of all externals (*ib.*, p. 184); the development of "forms" is a matter for Christians themselves.

² Mt. xxviii. 18.

³ Jo. xx. 21.

observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”¹

As pastors of the Church the apostles and their successors will have Christ with them to the end. “Behold,” He said, “I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.”² In executing their great commission, they will be enlightened and assisted by the Holy Spirit.³ Their pastoral authority will be absolute and enduring. They must be listened to as Christ Himself. To despise them is to despise Him.⁴

¹ Mt. xxviii. 20.

² *ib.*

³ Jo. xiv. 16, 17, 26 ; xv. 26 ; xvi. 13, 14.

⁴ Lk. x. 16 ; Mt. xxviii. 19.

EXCURSUS

CHRISTIANITY AND PAULINISM

Many modern critics contend that it was Paul of Tarsus who transformed Christianity into Catholicism. "The inner development," writes Harnack, "which the new tendency virtually comprised, began at once. Paul was not the first to start it. Before and side by side with him there were obscure and nameless Christians in the dispersion, who took up gentiles into the new society. They did away with the particularistic and statutory regulations of the law, by declaring that these were to be understood in a purely spiritual sense and to be interpreted as symbols. . . . But the goal of the movement was not yet reached. So long as the words: 'the former religion is done away with,' remained unspoken there was always a fear that, in the next generation, the old regulations would be brought forward again in their literal meaning. . . . Some one had to stand up and say: 'The old is done away with'; he had to brand any further pursuit of it as a sin; he had to show that all things were become new. The man who did that was the Apostle Paul, and it is in his having done it that his greatness in the history of the world consists. . . . It was Paul who delivered the Christian religion from Judaism."

As to the attitude of the other apostles, Harnack remarks that "if we praise the man who, without being able to appeal to a single word of his Master's, undertook such a bold venture by the help of the

Spirit and with the letter against him, we must none the less pay the meed of honour to those personal disciples of Jesus who, after a bitter internal struggle, ultimately associated themselves with Paul's principles. . . . History has shown with unmistakable plainness what was kernel and what was husk in the message of Jesus. . . . Husk were the whole of the Jewish limitations; . . . and in the strength of Christ's spirit the disciples broke through these barriers." ¹

All this means that Paul attached to Christ's message a meaning *which was not intended by its Author*. The gospel was *in itself* fundamentally catholic; it was "*meant to be transplanted*," ² but Jesus was unconscious of the fact. In universalizing Christianity, Paul and the other apostles had the letter against them.

The contention cannot be sustained. Now that we have traced the main outlines of the synoptic ecclesiology, we are in a position to realize how utterly unfounded is the charge of doctrinal illegitimacy—such is *really* the charge—which critics have levelled at the Pauline Gospel. "Paulinism," we have seen, had its beginnings in Christ's personal teaching. It was not Paul of Tarsus, but Jesus of Nazareth, who denationalized the "new tendency." If Paul stood up and proclaimed that "Christ is the end of the Law," ³ he merely re-echoed an earlier pronouncement by his Master to the effect that the Law and "the prophets

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 178-183.

² *ib.*, p. 181.

³ Rom. x. 4.

were until John.”¹ It was not left to the apostle of the gentiles to realize what was “kernel” and what “husk” in the new message, and to separate what was outward and accidental from what was inner and essential. No ; catholicism was founded, and *consciously* founded, by the Galilean Prophet.

But this is not all. The critics, it should be observed, have given the lie to Paul himself. They contend that in preaching universalism, he had the “letter” against him. Paul himself, on the other hand, disclaims all doctrinal originality, and does so with an insistence that is almost tiring. In matters of faith and of discipline he simply imparts what he has learned ; and whenever he takes upon himself to issue instructions in his own name, he is careful to distinguish them from “the precepts of the Lord.”² Again and again he proclaims himself *an apostle of Jesus Christ*. By direct personal revelation, he has been taught what the other apostles have learned from the lips of Jesus. Their gospels are, therefore, identical, and Paul, to silence his calumniators, takes care to prove it.³

Finally, who can believe that limitations which attached to Christ’s message, and which were intended by Him to endure, came to be discarded as husk by the immediate disciples ? Who can believe that men, who knew their Master to have been the Son of God, *consciously* took a step which was neither foreseen nor intended by Him ? To say that *for the gospel’s sake* they entered on a

¹ Lk. xvi. 16.

² 1 Cor. vii. 12–15 ; Gal. i. 11, 12.

³ Gal. ii. 1 *sqq.*

career which the Master, with whom they had eaten and drunk, had never sanctioned;¹ or to say that they did so “*in the strength of His spirit*”² is, for the critics, to say just nothing at all. Harnack seems to feel the difficulty of his position here. That the *personal* disciples “broke through the barriers” he refers to as being “the most remarkable fact of the apostolic age.”³ “*Remarkable*” is not strong enough; *incredible* is the word.

If Paul was pre-eminently the apostle of universalism, if catholicism found a home in his gospel, his fellow-apostles shared his principles.⁴ Peter was a thorough catholic in practice no less than in preaching.⁵ So were the others. Communities established by them seem to have been quite as free from “nationalism” as were those founded by St. Paul.

Theologians are right; it was not left to the apostle of the gentiles to inaugurate catholicism. Christ and the immediate disciples were also for expansion. Paulinism is nothing more than the personal teaching of Jesus analysed and legitimately developed.⁶

¹ Harnack : *Mission*, vol. i, p. 61. ² *v. supra*.

³ *op. cit.*, p. 183.

⁴ At least subsequently to the conversion of Cornelius. Harnack states that “Paul was not the first missionary to the gentiles; that he never claims to have been absolutely the pioneer of the Gentile Mission” (*Mission*, vol. i, p. 48).

⁵ *cfr.* Acts x. 48 ; xi. 4 *sqq.* ; xv. 7 *sqq.* ; Gal. ii. 12.

⁶ In an able article written for the *Revue Bénédictine* (April, 1912) Dom Chapman shows that St. Paul was perfectly acquainted with the words of promise (Mt. xvi. 17).

CHAPTER IV

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

THE DIDACHE

THE *Didache* (διδαχή) is a very ancient Christian document. It bears two titles, one: διδαχή τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων ("The teaching of the twelve apostles"); the other, older and probably the original: διδαχή κυρίου διὰ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. ("The teaching of the Lord [as preached] to the Gentiles by the twelve apostles.").¹ The author is unknown, but his work professes to be a summary or compendium of the teaching of Jesus as it was proposed to the nations by the Twelve.² Although the exact date of its composition cannot be determined, critics are agreed as to its antiquity.³ We may assign it, with a high

¹ The *Didache* was discovered in 1873 by Bryennios, Patriarch of Nicomedia, in the Constantinopolitan or Hierosolymitan MS. [C.].

² It is worthy of notice that the author regards the Twelve, and not Paul and Barnabas alone, as the teachers of the ἔθνη. Some ancient writers, however, who refer to the document omit the word δώδεκα in the title.

³ The internal evidence goes to show that first-century conditions obtained when the *Didache* was written. Christians

degree of probability to the last decades of the first century.¹ The place of composition was, most likely, Syria or Palestine.²

The work consists of two parts. The first³ embodies an ethical or moral instruction on "The Two Ways," the way of Life (righteousness),⁴ and the way of Death (unrighteousness).⁵ This instruction is intended for catechumens, and is followed by a discussion of baptism,⁶ of prayer and fasting,⁷ and of the Eucharist.⁸ The second part treats of community life; of the standing of the *ἀπόστολοι καὶ προφήται*, while acting as itinerant teachers,⁹ and while permanently resident in the community;¹⁰ of the treatment of travelling brethren;¹¹ of the Sunday Eucharistic service;¹² and, finally, of ecclesiastical superiors.¹³ The

still expected the *Parousia*; the itinerant *ἀπόστολοι καὶ προφήται* had not yet disappeared; the Eucharist was still celebrated after the evening meal; and the titles *πρεσβύτερος* and *ἐπίσκοπος* were still synonymous (*cfr.* Lightfoot: *Ap. F.*, p. 215; Bardenhewer: *Patr.*, p. 20.).

¹ *cfr.* Barden: *loc. cit.*

² So great was the authority of the *Didache* in the primitive church that many regarded it as Scripture. Clement of Alex., for example, quotes it as being inspired (*Strom.* i. 20, 100), while Eusebius notes the fact that it had been wrongly included by some in the canon (*H. E.* iii. 25, 4; *cfr.* Lightfoot: *op. cit.*, p. 216; Barden.: *op. cit.*, p. 20.).

³ cc. i-x.

⁶ c. vii.

⁹ c. xi.

⁴ cc. i-iv.

⁷ c. viii.

¹⁰ c. xiii.

⁵ c. v.

⁸ cc. ix, x.

¹¹ c. xii.

¹² c. xiv.

¹³ c. xv.

Didache concludes with a warning: we should be watchful in view of the imminent *παρουσία*.¹

There is in each church a hierarchy of "bishops" and deacons. These are authoritative teachers.² The Christian is exhorted to respect the word which he has heard.³ Those who preach the Gospel are to be esteemed and revered as the Lord Himself. Their voice is the voice of God.⁴

Christianity is a deposit, a tradition. It is a treasury of truths and precepts which has come down to us from Christ through the apostles, and which we must neither augment nor diminish. The Church cannot alter the *διδαχή*: "All your deeds do as you find it in the Gospel of our Lord."⁵ . . . Thou shalt never forsake the commandments of the Lord, but shalt keep those things which thou hast received, neither adding to them not taking away from them."⁶ Even prophetic teaching which is found to be at variance with the received teaching is to be rejected. "Whosoever shall teach you those things which have been said before, receive him; but if he teach a different doctrine, receive him not."⁷ Defined teaching is irreformable.

All who are baptized form together one Church of God. The Eucharistic prayer preserved in the

¹ c. xvi.

² c. xv.

³ c. iii.

⁴ c. iv.

⁵ c. iv.

⁶ c. iv.

⁷ c. xi.

Didache contains the following sublime passage :
 “ As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom.¹ . . . Remember, Lord, Thy Church, which has been sanctified, to gather it together from the four winds into the Kingdom which Thou hast prepared for it.”² There is, therefore, the local church, with its resident hierarchy,³ to which itinerant preachers are subordinated ;⁴ and there is also the Church of all churches. Schism is expressly reprobated.⁵

THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT

St. Clement was Bishop of Rome towards the close of the first century. Tertullian⁶ and many of

¹ Here the author interjects : “ But let no one eat or drink of this Eucharistic thanksgiving save such as have been baptized.”

² cc. ix, x.

³ c. xv.

⁴ The contention of many modern critics that the Church of the *Didache* was instructed exclusively by itinerant missionaries cannot be sustained. The tradition received from Christ through the apostles and their successors was regarded as alone authoritative. Hence the doctrines of the itinerant missionary were carefully scrutinized by the Church and rejected if found to be at variance with “ the things which had been said before ” (*v. supra*).

⁵ οὐ ποιήσεις σχίσμα (c. iv).

⁶ *De Praescript.* xxxii.

the Latin Fathers name him as Peter's immediate successor.¹ Other early authorities, including Augustine,² Optatus,³ and the Apostolic Constitutions,⁴ place him after Linus, giving as the order: 'Peter, Linus, Clement.' Others, again, name him fourth, his immediate predecessor being Anacletus (or Cletus). The last-mentioned order—'Peter, Linus, Anacletus, Clement'—is that given by Irenaeus,⁵ Eusebius,⁶ Jerome,⁷ and Epiphanius,⁸ and seems to be, on the whole, the most trustworthy.⁹ For our purposes, however, Clement's exact position in the line of Roman bishops matters little. We are satisfied to know that he was a first century bishop of Rome, and this is not disputed.

The so-called First Epistle of St. Clement to the Corinthians is probably the only authentic work of his that has come down to us. Written towards the close of the reign of Domitian (96-98

¹ This opinion is probably based on the so-called "Clementine" literature, and is now regarded as unhistorical by practically all critics (Bardenhewer : *Patrol.*, pp. 25, 26 ; Lightfoot : *Ap. F.*, pt. i. vol. i. p. 66).

² Ep. liii *ad Gen.* n. 2.

³ *De Schism. Donat.* ii. 3.

⁴ vii. 6.

⁵ *Adv. H.* iii. 3, n. 3.

⁶ *H. E.* iii. 15, n. 34.

⁷ *De vir.* xv.

⁸ *Haer.* xxvii. 6.

⁹ *cfr.* Lightfoot : *vol. cit.*, pp. 66, 200-345 ; *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, f. xviii.

A.D.),¹ its purpose was to admonish the Christians at Corinth who had revolted against their clergy.

The letter, it should be noted, professes to be addressed ‘to the Church of God which sojourneth at Corinth, by the Church of God which sojourneth at Rome.’ The name of Clement does not appear in the text. Practically all modern critics, however,—following the unanimous voice of tradition²—agree in attributing the document to him.

Substance of the letter.—The *Prima Clementis* opens with an apology. “By reason of the sudden and repeated calamities . . . which are befalling us,” it runs, “we consider that we have been somewhat slow to pay attention to the matters of dispute which have arisen among you.”³ The writer then proceeds to contrast at some length the present deplorable condition of the Corinthian Church with her glorious past, when her members submitted themselves to their rulers (τοῖς ἡγουμένοις) and when every sedition (στάσις) and every schism (σχίσμα) was abominable to them.⁴

Clement admonishes the evil-doers,⁵ and exhorts them to do penance. “We should be obedient unto God,” he writes, “rather than follow those

¹ Heg. apud Eus. : *H. E.* iii. 16 ; iv. 22 ; Barden. : *op. cit.*, p. 27. Lightfoot : *vol. cit.*, p. 342.

² *cfr.* Eus. : *H. E.* iii. 38 ; Jer. : *De vir.* xv. ; Barden. : *op. cit.*, p. 27 ; Lightfoot : *vol. cit.*, pp. 361 *sqq.*

³ c. i.

⁴ cc. ii. *sqq.*

⁵ c. vii.

who in arrogance and unruliness have set themselves up as leaders in abominable jealousy.”¹ Examples of subjection to authority are not far to seek. The material universe observes the divine law. The heavens are moved by God’s direction, and obey Him. The sun, the moon, and the dancing stars move in harmony within the bounds assigned to them, without any “swerving aside.”² In the army each man obeys his superior officer. “Therein is utility.”³ In the living body members conspire and unite “in subjection” to promote the well-being of the whole.⁴ Christians should take pattern by these, enlisting themselves with earnestness in God’s faultless ordinances;⁵ . . . for “while they follow the institutions of the Master they cannot go wrong.”⁶ They should reverence their ecclesiastical superiors and be subject to them.⁷

The hierarchy is of divine institution. It was so under the old dispensation. “The offerings and ministrations God commanded to be performed with care, and at fixed times and seasons. And where, and by whom, He would have them performed He Himself determined by His Supreme will. Unto the high-priest his proper functions were assigned, and to the priests their proper office

¹ c. xiv.⁴ *ib.*² c. xx.⁵ *ib.*³ c. xxxvii.⁶ c. xl.⁷ c. xxi.

was appointed . . . The layman was bound by the layman's ordinances. No one was at liberty to act contrary to these ordinances." ¹

The principle of apostolic succession is clearly enunciated by Clement. Bishops rule by right divine. They are from the apostles: the apostles are from Christ: Christ is from God. "The apostles preaching everywhere, in country and town, appointed their first-fruits . . . to be bishops and deacons unto them that should believe." ² Further, they provided a continuance that if these should fall asleep other approved men should succeed to their ministration. Bishops hold office in virtue of appointment coming, not from the faithful, but from the apostles and through them from Christ. The bishop's office is for life. ³

Christians form together one body of Christ. Schism is inexcusable: "Wherefore are there strifes and wraths and factions and divisions and war among you? . . . Wherefore do we tear and rend asunder the members of Christ . . . and reach such a pitch of folly, as to forget that we are members one of another." ⁴ Schism is so great an evil that individuals should be prepared to make any personal sacrifice, however great, that the Church may be saved from it, and "that the flock of Christ may be at peace with its duly appointed

¹ c. xl.

² c. xlii.

³ c. xliv.

⁴ c. xlvi.

pastors.”¹ The revolt against the clergy at Corinth was gravely sinful. All who took part in it, including “those who laid the foundation of the dissension,” must submit themselves to the deposed presbyters and obtain forgiveness, “receiving chastisement unto repentance.”² Submission to the established hierarchy is necessary for salvation.

The letter concludes with an admonition: “If you receive our counsel,” it runs, “you shall have no occasion of regret.”³ . . . But if certain persons should be disobedient unto the words spoken by Christ through us, let them understand that they will entangle themselves in no slight transgression and danger; but we will be guiltless of this sin.⁴ . . . Therefore it is right for us to submit the neck, and occupying the place of obedience, to take the side of them that are the leaders of our souls, that, ceasing from this foolish dissension, we may attain unto the goal. For ye will give us great joy and gladness if ye render obedience unto the things written by us through the Holy Spirit, and root out the unrighteous anger of your jealousy according to the entreaty which we have made for peace and concord in this letter.”⁵

Ecclesiology.—The purpose of the *Prima Clementis* is to condemn anarchy in the Church. The hierarchy is of divine institution; ecclesiastical

¹ c. liv.

³ c. lviii.

² cc. xlviii-lvii.

⁴ c. lix.

⁵ c. lxiii.

rulers are appointed to office, not by their flocks, but by Christ Himself through the apostles and their successors. The faithful cannot depose rulers who are true to their trust. They are obliged to obey them as soldiers obey their officers. To withhold obedience is to oppose the Master's own ordinances. The local church is a visible society.

There is also a Church of churches. Christians are soldiers of one army, members of one body.¹ They have one God and one Christ and one Spirit of grace and one calling (κλησις) in Christ.² One calling, one church: μία κλησις, μία ἐκκλησία.

"The 'Prima Clementis,' " writes Batiffol, "is the epiphany of the Roman primacy."³ This is now practically admitted by the critics. "It is easy to prove," says Harnack, "that even in the first letter of Clement there is a very big dose of Roman Catholicism."⁴ The circumstances in which the letter was penned are noteworthy. The first century had not yet come to a close. St. John was still alive and bishop of Ephesus. Rome was separated from Corinth by some six or seven hundred miles, Ephesus by scarce one-third that distance. Between Corinth and Ephesus, moreover, there existed great facilities of communication. The Prima Clementis is thus a *de facto* witness to the Roman primacy. If Rome was the recognized

¹ c. xxxvii.

² c. xlv.

³ *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁴ *Theol. Lit.*, Jan. 16, 1909.

mistress of Christendom ; if Clement was burdened with the care of all the churches, his action in the circumstances, and the equally remarkable inaction of St. John, become perfectly intelligible. In any other hypothesis the incident involves a mystery.

It has been suggested that the deposed presbyters had appealed to Clement for redress ; but then, why should they have appealed to the distant bishop of Rome, and not rather to the apostle-bishop of Ephesus, to whom access could have been had so easily ? We may remark further that modern exegetes do not favour the view that the *Prima Clementis* was written at the instance of the Corinthian clergy.¹ Clement's intervention in the case seems to have been quite spontaneous.

Professor Sohm has succeeded in grasping the ecclesiology of St. Clement, but to little purpose. The *Prima Clementis*, he admits, gives expression to the doctrine of Roman Catholicism² ; *but the doctrine was then quite new*. The Church from its inception until the closing years of the first century was an 'anarchical' kingdom, governed exclusively by Love and by charismatic manifestations

¹ The hypothesis that the Corinthians solicited Clement's intervention is regarded by Bardenhewer as incompatible with certain passages in the letter (*cfr. op. cit.*, p. 27).

² A startling admission by one of the ablest Protestant controversialists of our time. By the doctrine of Catholicism he means the doctrine which teaches that the Church of Christ is, by divine law, a visible society governed by the bishops and by the pope (*cfr. Bat. : op. cit.*, pp. 130, 131).

of the Spirit. It was only when the decline of faith and of Christian charity made government by visible authority a practical necessity that Clement ushered in Roman Catholicism!

Bishop Lightfoot, on the contrary, finds in the Letter no evidence to support the Roman, still less the papal claims. Clement's intervention in the case, he admits, was *a step* towards papal domination, but the language of the document is inconsistent with the possession of papal authority by the writer. Clement, he asserts, acted merely as spokesman of the Roman Church. Hence were we even to admit that the tone of the letter is authoritative, it would not follow that the implied authority was vested in the writer, but rather in the Church for which he spoke. But the language and tone of the Epistle are not really authoritative. The *Prima Clementis* is nothing more than "a dignified remonstrance in which the Romans as a community deal with the Corinthians on terms of equality, strong only in the righteousness of their cause and feeling, as they had a right to feel, that these counsels of peace were the dictation of the Holy Spirit." ¹

As our work is not a formal defence of the papacy, we do not feel called upon to deal at any length with the first part of the argument. We may remark, however, that if the *Prima Clementis*

¹ *Ap. F., vol. cit.*, pp. 69 *sqq.*

implies the possession of a certain authority by the Roman Church, it affords a very fair argument indeed for the view that the authority in question was vested in the writer. Clement, as Lightfoot himself strongly argues,¹ was monarchical bishop of Rome.

‘In the Clementine Epistle,’ we are told, ‘the Romans remonstrate with the Corinthians on terms of equality.’ We have failed to discover in the document itself any grounds for this assertion. The writer does not merely advise ; he *commands*. He holds the place of God. Those who disobey him disobey Christ, and sin mortally.² The evil-doers are bound to render obedience to the things spoken by him through the Holy Spirit.³ His intervention was not a work of supererogation. No ; it was a duty incumbent upon him. He is careful to account for his delay in taking action.⁴ Having fulfilled his obligations in their regard, his conscience will be at peace, although his efforts to quell the revolt may prove ineffectual.⁵ Is this the language of equality ? Lightfoot himself seems to be conscious of the weakness of his position here. The tone of

¹ *Ap. F.*, pp. 67 *sqq.*

² c. lix.

³ cc. lix, lxiii.

⁴ c. i.

⁵ c. lix. It is history that his efforts were not ineffectual, and that the claim to sovereignty implicitly made by him was acquiesced in by those against whom it was made.

the letter, he admits, is “*urgent and almost imperious!*” What is the meaning of this? ¹

The ‘almost imperious’ tone he tries to explain by stating that the Romans, in remonstrating with the Corinthians, “were strong only in the righteousness of their cause, feeling, as they had a right to feel, that these *counsels of peace* were the dictation of the Holy Spirit.” To describe the Roman instructions as counsels is to speak inaccurately. There is question, not of counsels, but of strict precepts. The *Prima Clementis* speaks of obedience and disobedience.² We obey precepts; counsels we merely follow.

As to the explanation offered, the Roman Church was no doubt conscious of the justice of her cause, conscious, too, that her intervention was divinely sanctioned. But surely this does not suffice to explain the authoritative tone of the *Prima Clementis*. How does Lightfoot’s explanation square with the principles laid down in the Letter itself? Clement teaches—and this is his primordial principle—that Christians owe obedience to ecclesiastical superiors *because these constitute a hierarchy established by Christ*. To resist them is to disobey the Master. What then are we to infer when we

¹ Dr. Lindsay describes the contents of the *Prima Clementis* as “calm injunctions issued in measured language” (*op. cit.*, p. 193).

² Gr. ἐὰν δὲ τινες ἀπειθήσωσιν . . . ἐὰν ὑπὲρ τοῦτο γινόμενοι . . . (cc. lix, lxiii).

find the same letter stating that the mischief-makers at Corinth are bound under pain of grave sin to obey the precepts imposed upon them by the Church of Rome? Is it not implied that the precepts in question are imposed by virtue of authority received from Christ? Finally, Lightfoot has not explained why the "dignified remonstrance" came from the distant Church of Rome, and not rather from the neighbouring Church of Ephesus, which, he holds, became the headquarters of Christendom after the destruction of Jerusalem,¹ and which was at this time ruled by the apostle John.

Advocates of democratic theories of church government labour much to give a 'popular' interpretation to certain passages of the *Prima Clementis*. "The one thought running through all the earlier documents," writes Dr. Lindsay, "is that the power to render special service to the community . . . depends on the possession of 'gifts' engrafted by the Spirit on individual character; and the occasion of these particular services is their recognition by the community *who appoint the brethren to serve it in ruling it*. . . . The function of the missionary or his deputy . . . was to advise the community in their selection of those who were to be over them and to inculcate such principles of selection as would abide permanently in their minds and secure a succession

¹ *Ap. F.*, pt. ii, vol. i, p. 438.

of worthy office-bearers when the first missionaries were no longer present to advise ; or to use the words of St. Clement : ‘ Our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name (dignity) of the overseer’s office ; for this cause, therefore, . . . they appointed the aforesaid persons . . . and afterwards gave a further injunction that if they should fall asleep other approved men should succeed to their administration.’ ¹ . . . In the Epistle of St. Clement we find that the Congregation is the supreme authority.” ² Dr. Dale writes in the same strain : “ From the Epistle of Clement it is clear,” he argues, “ that in apostolic times the whole Church not only concurred in the appointment of its elders but had the power to depose them.” ³

It would be difficult to find anything more diametrically opposed to the principles of St. Clement than a “ popular ” theory of church government. For him the principle of apostolic succession rules everywhere. “ The apostles,” he writes, “ received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. So then, Christ is from God, and the apostles are from Christ. Both, therefore, came of the will of God in the appointed order. Having thus received a charge . . . the apostles went forth bearing the glad tidings. . . . So preaching

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 152.

² *ib.*, p. 176 n.

³ *ib.*, p. 55.

everywhere in country and town they appointed their first-fruits . . . to be bishops and deacons unto them that should believe.¹ . . . Having appointed the aforesaid persons they afterwards provided a continuance that if these should fall asleep other approved men should succeed to their ministration. Those, therefore, who were appointed by them, or afterwards by other men of repute with the consent of the whole Church, and have ministered blamelessly . . . we consider to be unjustly thrust out from their ministration.”²

Could the principle of apostolic succession be more clearly inculcated? Office-bearers are *elected* by the people, but *appointment* comes from Christ Himself through the apostles or “other men of repute.” Clement seems to imply that those who do not minister blamelessly may be justly thrust out; but by whom? Manifestly by those who appointed them. If the commonalty did not appoint, the commonalty cannot depose. If “Clement of Rome is a good authority for the fact that about thirty years after Paul’s death the Church at Corinth claimed and exercised the power to depose its presbyters,”³ he is an equally good authority for the fact that the Church in the case acted *ultra vires*.

¹ c. xlii.

² c. xliv.

³ Dale : *op. cit.*, p. 40.

THE IGNATIAN EPISTLES

What we know of the personal history of St. Ignatius may be set down in a few lines. He was the second, or, if we include Peter, the third bishop of Antioch.¹ During a persecution which broke out under Trajan,² he was dragged before the provincial magistrate and condemned to the wild beasts. On his way to Rome to have the sentence executed, the martyr-bishop wrote seven letters, which have come down to us.³ These contain what we know of his teaching.⁴

¹ Origen : *Hom. vi. in Lk.* ; Eus. *H. E.* iii. 22.

² 98-117 A.D.

³ The authenticity of the Seven Letters was long bitterly contested by Protestant controversialists. The whole of the Ignatian literature they brushed aside as "a mass of falsification and fraud." "We assert," writes the author of *Essays on Supernatural Religion*, "that none of the Epistles have any value as evidence for an earlier period than the end of the second or beginning of the third century, even if they possess any value at all. . . . The martyr-journey of Ignatius to Rome is, for cogent reasons, declared to be wholly fabulous, and the Epistles purporting to be written during that journey must be held to be spurious" [*cfr.* Lightfoot : *Essays on Supernatural Religion* (pp. 62, 63)]. But the controversy may now be regarded as closed. Practically all modern scholars, including Bardenhewer, Zahn, Lightfoot, Harnack and Ritschl, admit that the letters are genuine. The entire evidence for their authenticity is set forth in scholarly fashion by Lightfoot (*Ap. F.*, pt. ii, vol. i, pp. 328-430 ; *cfr.* *Essays on Supernatural Religion* ; Barden. : *Patr.*, pp. 34, 35).

⁴ *cfr.* Lightfoot : *Ap. F.*, pt. ii, vol. i, pp. 28-30 ; vol. ii, pp. 448 *sqq.* ; Barden. : *op. cit.*, p. 30 ; Schmid-Schobel : *Patr.*, p. 79. The date usually assigned to the martyrdom of St. Ignatius is 107 A.D.

The Local Church.—For Ignatius Christians of a district or city form together a single association. Control is by a resident hierarchy consisting of a monarchical bishop (supreme), a college of priests and deacons. *Without these three there is no Church.*¹ Submission to the bishop is necessary for salvation. He holds the place of God.² It is only those who are with the bishop that are of God and of Christ Jesus.³ The unity of the Church is a unity of flesh (through authority) and of spirit (through grace).⁴ Members symbolize their union by “breaking *one* bread.”⁵

When Ignatius wrote, the Asiatic churches were threatened with two forms of heresy. One—Docetism—denied the reality of the Sacred Humanity; the other was Judaism.⁶ The Saint admonishes Christians to guard themselves against *ἑτεροδοξία*.⁷ In matters of belief, he urges, we cannot be too wary. False teachers are mad dogs that bite by stealth; their bite is hard to heal.⁸ The hierarchy is our safeguard. The bishop is the Christian’s tower of strength against

¹ Χωρὶς τούτων ἐκκλησία οὐ καλεῖται (Trall. iii.)

² *ib.* iv; Smyrn. ix.

³ Phil. iii.

⁴ Magn. i, xiii.

⁵ Phil. iv.

⁶ *cf.* Eph. ix, xv; Magn. x, xi; *cf.* Trall. vi, xi; Phil. vi; Smyrn. v–vii. Bardenhewer and others think there is question of one sect only,—Judaising Gnostics.

⁷ Magn. viii.

⁸ Eph. vii.

heresy. Episcopal sanction is the hall-mark of orthodoxy.¹

The exercise of the hierarchical *magisterium* enables the Church to purge out effectively all extraneous doctrines. "Heterodox" teachers and their followers—*i.e.*, for Ignatius all who are not "with the bishop"—are *vitandi*. Heresy is something intrusive; it is *strange fodder* (ἀλλότρια βοτάνη).² Those who partake of it become differentiated from those who, remaining united to the bishop, are nourished only by what is genuine and Christian.³ Heresy is separative.

Protestant exegetes refuse to recognize in Ignatius a witness to "episcopacy." "It is pathetic," writes Dr. Lindsay, "to see the fiery impassioned words of the martyr used as missiles by reckless preachers of episcopal supremacy. . . . His writings are a proof that the threefold ministry in some form or other did exist, early in the second century, in some parts of the Church, though not in others. . . . Further, the bishop is not an autocrat. . . . He is helpless without his council of presbyters. . . ." ⁴

¹ The written word as a rule of faith Ignatius refers to, but does not discuss. He implies its insufficiency however (Phil. viii, *cfr.* Bat. : *op. cit.*, pp. 136, 137).

² Trall. vi.

³ . . . μόνη τῇ χριστιανῇ τροφῇ χρῆσθε, ἀλλοτρίας δὲ βοτάνης ἀπέχεσθε ἥτις ἐστὶν αἵρεσις . . . (*ib.*)

⁴ Lindsay : *op. cit.*, pp. 194 *sqq.* ; Lightfoot : *SS. Ign. and Polyc.* i., p. 382.

That Ignatius represents the Church as owing obedience to a threefold hierarchy is true. All three orders form a corporate whole to which the faithful are subject. But it is no less true that *supreme* control vests in the bishop. He is a rallying centre for the entire community. He holds the place of God the Father ;¹ and even the priests owe him *reverence* and *obedience*. Writing to the Ephesians the saint tells them that their “ famous *presbyterium* is attached to the bishop as the chords to the lyre ; ”² and to the Magnesians : “ It does not become you to use your bishop too familiarly on account of his youth ; but rather in consideration of the power of God the Father to pay him all *reverence*, as I heard that the holy *presbyters* do ; for they do not take advantage of his youth in this high position ; but being prudent in God *they submit to him*. . . . ”³

To say that Ignatius witnesses to the existence of the threefold ministry in some parts of the Church though not in others is to misstate his testimony. We grant that Polycarp’s letter to the Philippians about the same time contains no reference to a monarchical bishop, and merely

¹ Magn. vi ; Trall. iii ; Smyrn. viii.

² Eph. iv.

³ Magn. iii. *cfr.* Smyrn. viii, where we read : “ Let that Eucharist be regarded as *βεβαία* which is offered by the bishop or by him to whom he has given his consent. . . . It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate the *ἁγίαπη*. Whatsoever he approves, that is also pleasing to God.”

enjoins submission to the presbyters and deacons. But even though his silence in the case justified us in inferring that the Philippians were then ruled by a college of presbyters, it would not follow that the Ignatian Epistles testify to the existence of a monarchical episcopate in some parts of the Church and not in others. No; Ignatius witnesses to episcopacy supreme and universal. If there existed churches with a different polity he was not aware of it. "Without these three," he says " (bishop, priests and deacons) there is no Church."

The Church Universal.—Like Clement of Rome, Ignatius seems to have drawn his ecclesiology bodily from the Pauline letters. The Church is Catholic,¹ and a visible organic unit. All who embrace Christianity are gathered together unto God.² They are building-stones erected into the same edifice,³ soldiers of the same army,⁴ members of the same body.⁵ "Christ was truly crucified," he writes, "that He might set up a standard unto all the ages, through the resurrection of His saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, *in one body of His Church.*"⁶

Isolated or solitary communities do not lie within the horizon of St. Ignatius. For him there

¹ The expression *ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία* is found for the first time in the Ignatian Epistles (Smyrn. viii).

² Magn. x.

⁴ Polyc. vi.

⁶ Smyrn. i

³ Eph. ix.

⁵ Eph. iv.

is a community of communities. A spirit of fraternal charity is everywhere in evidence. Inter-ecclesiastical communication is general; churches exchange greetings; letters and messengers pass freely to and fro; travelling brethren are entertained and escorted from church to church. In these and a hundred other ways the love of the brethren was externalized. "Christianity, a league of brothers," was no mere ideal; it was an accomplished fact in the time of St. Ignatius.

But more than this. The dispersed communities acknowledged a common flag. Christianity was an authoritative *κανών* to which the faithful everywhere were expected to conform. They ran together in harmony with the mind of God; the Gospel was the same for all. But how was general agreement in doctrine and discipline to be secured and maintained among so many? Let us hear Ignatius: "The faithful in each church," he writes, "should run in harmony with the mind of the bishop." This, he implies, will secure general harmony among the faithful everywhere, "because Jesus Christ is the mind of the Father and the bishops that are settled in the farthest parts of the earth are in the mind of Jesus Christ."¹ We need not elaborate. No one claims that bishops are individually infallible—still less inspired. There

¹ Eph. iii, iv. The doctrinal infallibility of the Church is clearly implied in this passage. It is elsewhere explicitly referred to (*cfr. ib. xvii. . . . ἵνα πνέῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀφθαρσίαν*).

is, therefore, an episcopal body corporate whose utterances represent the mind of Christ, and to which individual bishops, and, through them, the faithful everywhere must keep attuned. The Church has a central *magisterium*.

Schism.—St. Ignatius teaches that schism is *absolutely* sinful. To divide the Church is to divide the body of Christ.¹ Heresy and schism go hand in hand; they are equally indefensible. “As children of truth,” he writes, “shun division and wrong doctrines; where the shepherd is, there follow ye as sheep.”² The shepherd is the monarchical bishop, the authoritative exponent of the Christian teaching. Against the attacks of heresy he must stand “firm as an anvil when it is smitten.”³ The faithful must cleave to him. “Wheresoever the bishop shall appear there let the people also be; as where Jesus Christ is there is the Catholic Church.”⁴

Heretics and schismatics are excommunicated.⁵ They are separatists to their own destruction. In breaking with the established hierarchy they break with God and with Jesus Christ. To be saved they must “*repent and enter into the unity of the Church.*”⁶ *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*⁷

With heresy and schism there can be no com-

¹ Eph. iv.

⁴ Smyrn. viii.

² Phil. ii.

⁵ *ib.* iv.

³ Polyc. iii.

⁶ Phil. iii.

⁷ *cfr.* Eph. v, xiii, xx; Magn. vii.

promise, they are utterly wrong. "Unity though the heavens should fall" is the principle on which Ignatius rings the changes. "Be not deceived my brethren," he writes; "if any one followeth one that maketh a schism he doth not inherit the Kingdom of God."¹ To the Philadelphians he had proclaimed with God's own voice that all must subject themselves to the established hierarchy: "It was the preaching of the Spirit," he adds "who spoke thus: 'Cherish union; avoid schism . . . where there is division . . . there God abideth not.'"²

The Roman Primacy.—The letter addressed by Ignatius to the Church 'which had as her teachers the Apostles Peter and Paul'³ opens with the following passage: "Ignatius . . . unto her that hath found mercy in the bountifulness of the Father Most High and of Jesus Christ His only Son; to the Church that is beloved and enlightened through the will of Him who willed all things that are, by faith and love towards Jesus Christ our God; even unto her that hath the presidency in the place of the region of the Romans, being worthy of God, worthy of honour, worthy of felicitation,

¹ Phil. iii.

² *ib.* vii, viii.

³ Rom. iv. Although the Roman Church was founded by SS. Peter and Paul, the latter was never Bishop of Rome. All the early authorities speak of the Roman bishops as being successors not of Peter and Paul, but of Peter alone.

worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy in purity, and having the presidency of love, walking in the law of Jesus Christ . . . which Church also I salute in His Name.”¹

Anyone who compares this magnificent exordium with the inscriptions of the other Ignatian epistles will grant without difficulty that the Roman Church is here pre-eminently honoured. But what is the precise character of the pre-eminence? Is it authoritative or merely honorary? It is a question more readily put than answered; but some of the ablest exegetes contend that Ignatius here ascribes to the Roman Church a primacy of jurisdiction. We shall conclude our discussion of his letters by briefly examining the grounds for this contention.

The Church of Rome “presides in the place of the region of the Romans.”² This peculiarly-worded statement has been variously explained. Many Catholic scholars find in it a reference to a universal presidency, understanding *τόπος χωρίου Ῥωμαίων* of the Roman Empire. This interpretation, although it has been ably defended, I consider

¹ Rom. *exord.*

² Gr. *προκάθεται ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων*. Tertullian (*De Præscr.* 36) speaks of each apostolic church as presiding in its own place (. . . *cathedræ apostolorum suis locis præsident*). Durell (*The Historic Church*, p. 39, n. 2), following Lightfoot, argues that the presidency ascribed by Ignatius to the Roman Church implies nothing more. The objection is forcible, but the reader should take care to hear the other side before rejecting the Catholic interpretation.

far-fetched. A more satisfactory rendering is suggested by Batiffol. The presidency in question is, he holds, universal, but the words ἐν τόπῳ χωρίῳ Ῥωμαίων mean 'at Rome' simply. The verb προκάθεται he construes absolutely: "The Roman Church presides, and it presides at Rome." If this be the true interpretation the words ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥ. localize the presidency, rather than define the limits over which it extends.

Lightfoot and Protestant commentators generally understand the words ἐν τόπῳ χ. Ῥ. as indicating the range of the presidency: The Church of Rome presides in the country of the Romans, as the Church of Jerusalem might have been said to preside in Palestine. She was the principal Church in the Roman area. Her jurisdiction would have been somewhat akin to that exercised by a metropolitan see in our time.

But if this be the Saint's meaning, does it not seem strange that his letter to the Metropolitan Church of Ephesus, contains no reference to a presidency in 'the place of the region of the Asiatics.'? Further let us not forget that some ten to twenty years before this epistle was penned, the Roman Church *de facto* "presided" over churches situated well outside "the region of the Romans." Ignatius must have known of the "Prima Clementis"; he knew the past of the Roman Church: "You have never deceived anyone," he writes. "You have taught others." Now if it

be true, as Lightfoot himself supposes,¹ that the Saint had here in mind the *Prima Clementis*,—not to speak of other similar documents which may have been extant in his time and have since perished—is it at all likely that, in addressing and magnifying the Church of Rome, he should have limited the range of her presidency to the *χωρίον Ῥωμαίων*? We find it difficult to think so.

The presidency of the Roman Church is a presidency of love.² “This, then,” writes Dr. Lightfoot, “was the original primacy of Rome—a primacy not of the bishop but of the whole Church, a primacy not of official authority, but of practical goodness.”³ Funk on the other hand argues, with considerable force, for a more Catholic interpretation. The expression *προκαθήμενη τῆς ἀγάπης*, he contends, cannot be understood of a presidency or pre-eminence in practical goodness. The verb *προκάθηναι* is never employed except in conjunction with the name of a *place* or of a *collectivity*. Hence *ἀγάπη* here as elsewhere in the Ignatian letters⁴ denotes not the virtue of charity

¹ *Ap. F.*, pt. ii, vol. ii, p. 203.

² Gr. *προκαθήμενη τῆς ἀγάπης*.

³ *Ap. F.*, pt. i, vol. i, p. 71.

⁴ *cfr.* Trall. xiii: *ἀσβάζεται ὑμᾶς ἡ ἀγάπη Σμυρναίων*—“The *ἀγάπη* of the Smyrnians salutes you,” where *ἀγάπη* certainly appears to be synonymous with *ἐκκλησία* (*cfr.* Rom. ix, Phil. xi, Smyrn. xii). Lightfoot translates: “The love of the Smyrnians salutes you;” but the form of expression is strange.

but the Church ; and not merely the local church—it is she who presides over the ἀγάπη—but the Church Universal.

The passage as a whole is obscure ; but one must not exaggerate. Some points are sufficiently clear. To begin with it is certain that Ignatius addresses not the Roman bishop or hierarchy but the ἐκκλησία. The Roman Church then presides over at least *some churches*. She is also their authoritative instructor.¹ Her presidency, whatever be its range, is, therefore, *pastoral* and not, as Lightfoot contends, a mere pre-eminence in practical goodness. Further, in view of her authoritative intervention in the affairs of the Church at Corinth,—an intervention which Ignatius seems to have had in mind when writing the epistle—we consider it probable that her presidency is localized rather than limited by the words ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων.²

ST. POLYCARP

Polycarp, an immediate disciple of John the Evangelist, was bishop of Smyrna during the

¹ *cfr.* Rom. iii : ἄλλους ἐδιδάξατε, ἐγὼ δὲ θέλω ἵνα κακεῖνα βέβαια ἢ ἂ μαθητεύοντες ἐντέλλεσθε—"Ye taught others ; my desire is that those lessons shall hold good which as teachers ye *enjoin*."

² That the saint should have written ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων for ἐν Ῥώμῃ is, I confess, strange. Batiffol, however, regards such "affectation" as characteristic of Ignatius. I may add that the accuracy of Lightfoot's translation : "in the *country* of the region of the R.," is, to say the least, questionable.

earlier half of the second century. He was martyred in his eighty-sixth year. From an encyclical written by his bereaved flock and dealing with his martyrdom, we are able to fix the date of his death with approximate certainty as February 23, 155 A.D.¹ Of the numerous letters addressed by him to individuals and to communities² only one has reached us. It is addressed to the Philippians, who had requested him to send them a word of comfort and exhortation, together with any epistles of Ignatius which he might have in his possession.³ The authenticity of the letter is vouched for by Irenaeus.⁴

The author commends the kindness and fraternal charity of the Philippians in welcoming and escorting Ignatius and the other martyrs on their way to Rome.⁵ He cannot pretend to speak with the authority of their founder, Paul, nevertheless he will address a word of warning and exhortation to them.⁶ He condemns avarice as the root of all evil, exhorts wives to be faithful to their husbands, and to bring up their children in piety. Widows should be sober-minded; deacons blameless;

¹ *cfr.* Barden. : *op. cit.*, p. 36 ; Bat. : *op. cit.*, p. 166.

² *cfr.* Eus. *H. E.* v. 20, 28.

³ How strongly this request of the Philippians witnesses to the solidarity of the new Diaspora !

⁴ *Adv. hæc.* iii. 3, 4. Irenaeus describes the letter as *ικανωτάτη*

⁵ c. i.

⁶ c. iii.

young people chaste. "No profligate," he writes, "shall inherit the kingdom."¹

Christianity is a deposit, a treasury of divine truth which has come down to us from the apostles.² The faith is the same for all, and must be zealously guarded by all. Christians must beware of false brethren who in hypocrisy bear the name of the Lord and lead vain men into error.³ Heresy puts us outside the fold of Christ; it makes us children of the Adversary: "Whoso accepts the teaching of the Docetae is of the devil, and whoso perverts the *λόγια* of Jesus to his own lusts,⁴ and says that there is neither resurrection nor judgment, that man is the first-born of Satan."⁵ Tradition is the sole norm of orthodoxy. "Wherefore let us forsake the vain-doing of the many and their false teachings and turn unto the word delivered unto us from the beginning."⁶

The faith is statutory. Christians abide by the Lord's precepts and teaching,⁷ and obey the word.⁸ Obedience to the word is secured through obedience to the presbyters. To break with the established hierarchy is to break with God and with Christ.⁹ Schism is never lawful.

The faithful hold together; the Church is one. Christians everywhere conform to the same

¹ c. iv.

² c. vi.

³ *ib.*

⁴ A thrust at Antinomianism.

⁹ c. v.

⁵ c. vii.

⁶ *ib.*

⁷ c. ii

⁸ c. ix.

authoritative standard of belief and of discipline. They are joined together in the truth, and constitute a single brotherhood. "Stand fast," he writes, ". . . being firm in the faith and immovable loving the brethren and being kindly affectioned to each other, joined together in the truth.¹ . . . May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal High-priest Himself, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, build you up in truth and purity ; and may He grant you a lot and portion among His saints and to us with you and to all that are under heaven who shall believe in Christ Jesus. Pray for all the saints."²

The apostolic tradition, as handed down and interpreted by "the presbyters," was the saintly prelate's constant and only rule of faith. After his death one of his disciples, a Roman presbyter named Florinus, fell a victim to Gnosticism. Irenaeus, his fellow-disciple, wrote to rebuke him : "Florinus," his letter runs, "these opinions the presbyters, who went before us, and who were the companions of the apostles, did not deliver to thee. . . . Our master Polycarp related all that he had heard from the apostles concerning the Lord and His teaching, having received them from eye-witnesses of the Word of Life. And I am able to bear witness before God that if that blessed and apostolic presbyter had heard any such doctrines

¹ c. x.² c. xii.

he would have cried out and stopped his ears; and, as was his custom, would have exclaimed: 'Oh, good God, unto what times hast Thou kept me, that I should endure these things.'¹

Towards the close of 154, or early in 155, Polycarp made his way to Rome, in the hope of coming to an understanding with Anicetus as to the date on which Easter should be celebrated.² They failed to agree, but parted friends. At the conference Polycarp held for the Eastern practice, on the ground that it had come down from the apostles. Anicetus, on the other hand, contended that the Western custom was that followed by his predecessors the "presbyters" of Rome (τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ πρεσβυτέρων).³ That each adhered to his own view matters little; what is important is that both appealed to the same norm of orthodoxy—*tradition*.

OTHER EARLY WRITERS

All the available evidence goes to show that the principles inculcated by the apostolic fathers were universally recognized. Papias, a "hearer" of St. John⁴ and an intimate friend of Polycarp,⁵

¹ Eus. : *H. E.* v. 20, 4-7.

² Eus. : *H. E.* v. 24, 16.

³ *v. supra.*

⁴ *cfr.* Iren. *Adv. hæc.* v. 33.

⁵ *ib.* iii. 39.

adopts the 'traditional' rule of faith in dealing with Gnosticism.¹ His criterion of orthodoxy is the authentic teaching or λόγια of Christ, as received from His disciples and their followers. Apocryphal λόγια, as well as novel interpretations of genuine λόγια, must be set aside. To Gnosticism he opposes the παράδοσις.

Eusebius has partially rescued from the pit some encyclical letters, addressed by Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, to a number of churches,² during the period 166-175. These letters attest that general inter-ecclesiastical communication which we find so much in evidence in the sub-apostolic age.³ They also witness to the unity and inviolability of the authoritative faith. All or practically all treated of orthodoxy. The letter to the Lacedæmonians for example was a compendium of the sound teaching, while that addressed to the Nicomedians was a defence of the "canon" of truth against the heresy of Marcion. The letter to the churches of Crete forbade intercourse with heretics.⁴

¹ Papias' work was entitled: λογίων κυριακῶν ἐξηγήσεις ("Expositions of the Sayings of the Lord"). The work has perished except for a few passages preserved by Eusebius and Irenæus. Papias wrote about 130.

² He addressed letters to the Romans, Lacedæmonians, Nicomedians, and Cretans.

³ *v. supra.*

⁴ *cfr.* Eus. : *H. E.* iv. 23, 10-12 ; ii. 25, 8.

The author of "The Shepherd of Hermas" ¹ is conscious of the unity of the Christian faith and of the absolute sinfulness of heresy. "Those who introduce strange doctrines," he writes, "and subvert the servants of God . . . persuading them by foolish doctrines; these may repent. . . . Many have repented. But all who will not repent are lost." ² He suggests, further, that the bishop of Rome has the care of all the churches: "The aged woman," he writes, "came and asked me if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it. 'Thou hast done well,' she said, . . . 'write two little books and send one to Clement and one to Grapte. And Clement shall send his to the foreign cities for this is his duty (ἐκεῖνῳ γὰρ ἐπιτέτραπται).'" ³

¹ The date of composition is uncertain. Origen regarded the author as the same Hermas who is mentioned by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (c. xvi). The author of the Muratorian fragment, on the other hand, asserts that the work was composed by its author "*sedente cathedram urbis Romae ecclesiae Pio episcopo fratre eius*" (circ. 140-155), and this view is adopted by most modern critics, and by Bardenhewer, although it implies that Hermas was guilty of deceit in referring to Clement as a contemporary. A few scholars, with Zahn, date the work from the closing years of the first century. Lightfoot is undecided. All things considered, it seems most satisfactory to place the date of composition about the close of the first century and allow for a recension during the period 140-155.

"The shepherd" is quoted as Scripture by Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* iv. 20, 2). Origen, too, gives it as his personal opinion ('*ut puto*') that the work is divinely inspired (*Comm. in Rom.* x. 31).

² Sim. viii. c. 6.

³ Vis. ii. 4.

CHAPTER V

JUSTIN MARTYR

JUSTIN MARTYR was born of heathen parents at Nablus (ancient Sichem)¹ about the dawn of the second century.² In his early years he devoted himself to philosophy, and studied successively the systems of the Stoics, the Peripatetics, the Pythagoreans and the Platonists.³ Finding all unsatisfactory he finally embraced Christianity—"the words of the Saviour"—which he describes as the only sound and serviceable philosophy.⁴ For him the Christian religion is a great 'wisdom' of God,⁵ a "divine philosophy,"⁶ more lofty than all human systems.⁷ Tertullian entitles him "philosopher and martyr."⁸ He laid down his life for his Master at Rome 163-167.⁹

Justin was the ablest Christian apologist of the second century. He defended the faith against pagans, Jews, and heretics. Most of his writings have unhappily perished, including his

¹ *Ap.* i. 1.

² *cfr.* Barden. : *op. cit.*, p. 49.

³ *Dial.* ii.

⁴ *ib.* viii.

⁵ *ib.* xxxviii.

⁶ *Ap.* ii. 12.

⁷ *ib.* 15.

⁸ *cfr.* *Adv. Valent.* v.

⁹ *cfr.* Barden. : *loc. cit.*

chief work: *Syntagma adversus omnes haereses*. Numerous extant compositions have been ascribed to him, but of these only three are certainly genuine; they are: the two Apologies and the Dialogue with the Jew Trypho.

Truth.—Justin is above all else a truth-seeker. He followed the profession of philosopher even subsequently to his conversion,¹ and as an apologist concerned himself exclusively with the true: ² “I have mentioned these things,” he writes, “taking nothing whatever into consideration except the speaking of the truth.” ³ If he urges men to embrace Christianity, it is because he has found it to be an embodiment of truth. He reasons with the Emperor and with Trypho as with lovers of truth. If Christianity is truth, men are bound to embrace it; if it is not truth, let us have done with it.⁴ Such is his starting-point.

The Logos, the divine Word, is truth and the sole principle of truth. Christ was the Word made flesh; He was Truth itself Incarnate.

But the Word has been operative independently of the Incarnation. All men are to some extent partakers of the Word; and those who, like Socrates, and Abraham, lived “with reason” (μετὰ λόγου), were Christians, though they lived

¹ Eus. *H. E.* xi. 8. *Dial.* i, viii.

² Celsus calls Justin's Apology a “true discourse.”

³ *Dial.* cxx.

⁴ *Ap.* i. 2, 68; ii. 15; *Dial.* cxx.

anterior to Christ.¹ The Word is germinally operative in every human soul.² In so far as men, by the light of reason or by revelation, arrive at truth, they participate in the Word. The religious and philosophical systems of Jews, of heretics, and of heathens owe to the Word the measure of truth contained in each.³ “Whatever either lawgivers or philosophers uttered well, they elaborated by finding and contemplating some part of the Word. But since they did not know the whole of the Word, which is Christ, they often contradicted themselves. . . .”⁴

“ . . . But whatever things were rightly said among all men, are the property of us Christians.”⁵ All truth is Christian; and the fulness of truth is found only in the system established by Truth Incarnate. The Gospels—the memoirs of the Apostles (ἀπομνημονεύμετα τῶν ἀποστόλων)—are repositories of Christian truth.

Christianity Cosmopolitan and Catholic.—The Old Law has been abrogated;⁶ Christ is another Moses.⁷ He has established a new and everlasting covenant, to which men are admitted irrespective of race or nationality. Christians are a people of God, chosen indiscriminately from the nations.⁸ They constitute the true Israel, God’s own children, a new and elect race.⁹

¹ *Ap.* i. 46; *cf.* *Ap.* ii. 8.

² *ib.* ii. 10, 13.

³ *Dial.* xxxix.

⁴ *Ap.* ii. 10.

⁵ *ib.* 13, 20.

⁶ *Dial.* xi, xviii.

⁷ *ib.*

⁸ *ib.* *cf.* xxiv.

⁹ *ib.* cxxiii., cxxxv–vi.

The new 'tendency' is catholic; Christians are to be found in every land. "There is not any race of men . . . among whom prayers and eucharists are not celebrated in the name of Jesus."¹ The Gospel is "Christ's mighty word, which His Apostles, going forth from Jerusalem, preached *everywhere*; and although death is decreed against those who confess the name of Jesus, we *everywhere* both embrace and teach it."² The same gospel has been preached in every land by the Apostles and their successors.³

Christianity Individualistic. — The Christian system is *just*. If the individual is rewarded only for personal righteousness, he is punished only for personal sin. "Father shall not perish for son, nor son for father, but each for his own sin, as each shall be saved for his own righteousness"⁴ Further, "those who are foreknown to be sinners, whether men or angels, are not made wicked by God's fault."⁵ The Divine prevision does not involve determinism.

Christianity a Unit. — The faithful are bound together by many ties. They constitute one people;⁶ one visible whole,⁷ rounded off from pagans⁸ and Jews,⁹ on the one side, and from heretics on the other.¹⁰ They have one faith,¹¹ one

¹ *Dial.* cxvii.

² *Ap.* i. 45.

³ *ib.* 50.

⁴ *Dial.* cxl.

⁵ *ib.* cxli.

⁶ *ib.* cx-cxix.

⁷ *Ap.* i. 14, 25

⁸ *ib.* 25.

⁹ *ib.* 31, 36; *Dial.* xxxix.

¹⁰ *Dial.* xxxv.

¹¹ *ib.* cx-cxix.

regula morum,¹ one baptism.² In fine, they are coheirs to the same inheritance.³

Fraternal charity constitutes an additional bond.⁴ Christianity is an association of brothers, an ἀδελφότης.⁵ “Those who have assented to our teaching and have been baptized, are conducted to an assembly of the brethren that prayers may be offered for ourselves, for the newly-baptized, and for all others in every place.”⁶

The new ἀδελφότης is a *church*. In the Dialogue Justin quotes from Psalm xliv. the words: ‘Hearken, O Daughter, and behold, and incline thine ear and forget thy people and thy father’s house.’ “The word of God,” he proceeds, “speaks to those who believe in Him, as being one soul and one synagogue and *one church*, as to a daughter. It thus addresses the Church, which has sprung from His name and partakes of it (for we are all called Christians).”⁷ For Justin, accordingly, there is a Church of churches, which is the Bride of Christ. This church he sets over against the Jewish synagogue.⁸

The Way of Salvation.—The Son of God has saved men by enlightening them.⁹ Christ has delivered unto us a certain body of truths and precepts,¹⁰ for the conversion and restoration of

¹ *Ap.* i. 45, 50, 57; *Dial.* xxxix. ⁶ *Ap.* i. 65.

² *Ap.* i. 61; *Dial.* xiv, xlv.

⁷ *Dial.* lxiii, cx.

³ *Dial.* lix.

⁸ *ib.* cxxxiv.

⁴ *Ap.* i. 14, 67.

⁹ *Dial.* xxiv, xxxix.

⁵ *ib.*

¹⁰ *cfr. Ap.* i. 27; ii. 4.

the race.¹ Those who believe—"to whom the gates of light have been opened"—shall be saved.²

To avail of the Redemption, we must "admit the light," reform our lives, and be baptized. "Those who are persuaded and believe, and who undertake to live accordingly, repenting of sin committed, are baptized."³ We are saved through "water, faith, and word."⁴

Reason and Authority.—Christianity is a religion of authority. Justin is quite clear about this. "As Abraham believed the voice of God," he writes, "so we have believed God's voice spoken by the apostles."⁵ The new 'light' has emanated from the Word made flesh; ⁶ the Gospel is divine. Justin never tires of opposing it to the doctrines and precepts of men.⁷ To reject Christianity is to despise the word of the Lord.⁸

The gospel has reached us by tradition: "From Jerusalem there went forth into the world men, twelve in number, and these illiterate . . . but by the power of God they proclaimed to every race of men that they were sent by Christ, to teach to all the word of God"⁹ The Twelve have successors in the ministry. They were commissioned to

¹ *Ap.* i. 15, 23.

⁵ *Dial.* cxix.

² *Dial.* vii.

⁶ *ib.* xxiv., xxxix.; *Ap.* i. 13, 21.

³ *Ap.* i. 61.

⁷ *Dial.* cxl.

⁴ *Dial.* cxxxviii.

⁸ *ib.* cxx., cxxxiii.; *Ap.* i. 14; *cfr.* ii. 13.

⁹ *Ap.* i. 39.

preach the gospel to every race and in every land. Their voice would go out to the ends of the earth.¹

The apostles and their successors teach with the authority of the Master; to hear them is to hear Him.² "The doctrines, which we propose to you, are those delivered by Christ to the Twelve.³ . . . For these doctrines we are prepared to die."⁴

Christianity is, therefore, a *παράδοσις*; we stand by an authoritative tradition. Our knowledge of the divine nature and attributes, for example, is got by tradition.⁵ Christ is our teacher. What we have received from Him, through the apostles and their successors, we transmit to others who are willing to learn as we have been taught.⁶ When Justin is asked why Christians do not kill themselves and pass to God at once, and thus save pagans the trouble of executing them, he replies: 'If we killed ourselves, men would cease to be instructed in the divine doctrines.' Christianity is a definite deposit of divine truths transmitted from generation to generation.⁷

The gospel being the word of God, no one is at liberty to reject it. We know that the Christian teaching is true, not because it resembles in some respects the teaching of philosophers, but because it has been imparted by a divine Master.⁸ It must

¹ *Ap.* 40.

² *ib.* 53; *Dial.* cxxxvi.

³ *Ap.* i. 67.

⁴ *ib.* 8

⁵ *ib.* 10.

⁶ *ib.* 6, 13, 14.

⁷ *ib.* ii. 4.

⁸ *ib.* i. 23.

be accepted and upheld in its entirety. Truths of faith, which transcend reason, must be accepted on the authority of Christ who revealed them.¹ The principle holds in any revealed system: "The prophets proposing their inspired doctrines, did not use demonstration in their treatises, because they witnessed to a truth which is above all demonstration."² Could the principle of authority be more clearly inculcated?

It is therefore right and rational to accept mysteries of religion: they are portion of the 'mighty word.' The deposit, doctrinal and disciplinary, is, in itself, unpalatable. Many of its truths are mysteries,³ many of its precepts exacting;⁴ but "Christians who have been made wise by them, confess that the statutes of the Lord are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb; so that though threatened with death they do not deny Him."⁵

Christians implicitly profess the same truths, because all embrace the deposit. But absolute unanimity is not to be expected. Difference of opinion in matters of belief is perfectly legitimate,

¹ *Ap.* i. 14.

² *Dial.* vii.

³ *Ap.* i. 19-22: Justin instances the eternal generation of the Son as an example of a revealed mystery. The immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the dead are revealed truths which are demonstrable.

⁴ *Dial.* x.

⁵ *ib.* xxx.

within certain limits.¹ The deposit is immutable ; it can neither grow nor diminish. But our knowledge of its contents may grow ; truths of faith may be “ *defined*.”

It is only the rejection of *defined* doctrines that constitutes heresy. Those who deny the resurrection of the dead, for example,² or the eternity of hell³ are heretical. On the other hand, one may lawfully reject the doctrine of the millennium. Although probably contained in the *deposit*,⁴ it is not defined. Similarly observance of the Mosaic Law is licit, but optional. Those who hold that its observance is obligatory, profess heresy and incur excommunication.⁵

And yet reason has its province ; even a religion of authority has a rational basis. If we accept truths on authority, it is because we have convinced ourselves that it is rational to do so. Justin’s appeal throughout is professedly to reason, and his system is thoroughly self-consistent. Reason bids us accept even the deepest mysteries, when these are revealed by the Son of God. The Christian rule of faith is at once authoritative and rational.

Reason is the handmaid of faith ; it establishes the preambles. Reason, influenced by supernatural grace,⁶ leads us to embrace revelation.⁷

¹ *Dial.* lxxx.

⁴ *Dial.* lxxx.

² *ib.*

⁵ *ib.* xlvi–vii.

³ *Ap.* i. 8.

⁶ *ib.* vii, cxix.

⁷ *ib.* cxlii ; *Ap.* i. 53, 55.

It was so from the beginning. The divinity of the prophet's mission was established by his miracles ; and Justin, adopting the same principle, undertakes to prove¹ that Jesus is the Messias.²

But reason has to do with more than the mere preambles ; it plays an important part in the domain of faith proper. Christian truths, which are pronounced absurd by our adversaries, can be shown to be rational in themselves.³ On grounds of pure reason and analogy, Justin undertakes to justify our acceptance of some of the deepest mysteries, such as the eternal generation of the Word, His divine Sonship, His virginal birth, and the reality of His suffering.⁴ By reason, too, he demonstrates that human freedom and responsibility are not incompatible with the divine pre-science.⁵ He proves similarly the spirituality of the soul and the possibility of the resurrection.⁶

Reason is, however, a mere subsidiary criterion of Christian truth. Though we were utterly unable to demonstrate the possibility of the resurrection, we should still be bound to accept it on the authority of Christ, Who has said that " what is impossible with men is possible with God." ⁷ Those who refuse to believe what God has taught us through Christ, will be condemned to hell.⁸

¹ *Dial.* cxxxiv, cxxxvii.

⁵ *ib.* 43.

² *ib.* ix, xi, xxxix *sqq.*

⁶ *ib.* 18, 19.

³ *ib.* cxviii *sqq.*

⁷ *ib.*

⁴ *Ap.* i. 20, 30, 31 *sqq.*

⁸ *ib.*

Heresy and Schism.—Lovers of ‘wisdom,’ though professing the most diverse and conflicting doctrines, are all named philosophers; and yet it would be quite unjust to condemn all philosophers as fools, because some are not wise.¹ The principle holds equally in religion. Christians as a body, should not be condemned, because some who bear the Christian name are known to be unsound in faith or in morals. These men *name themselves* Christians, but are not really such. They differ from the genuine Christian, as foolish wisdom-seekers differ from the true philosopher.²

Heresy appeared in the Church at an early date. After the Ascension, some men, prompted by the devil, practised magical art and were declared gods by the people. Such were Simon and Menander. Marcion taught his disciples to believe that the World was created by a being inferior to God.³ The rise of heresies and schisms was predicted by Jesus.⁴

Christians constitute one Church, one fold. Heretics and schismatics form groups or sects apart.⁵ They laugh at us.⁶ They call themselves Christians, but are not really such. We name them after the authors of their respective doctrines: Marcians, Valentinians, Basilidians, Saturnilians, and so forth. Over against all heretical and

¹ *Ap.* i. 4, 7.

² *ib.* 26.

³ *ib.*

⁴ *ib.* 82; *Dial.* xxxv.

⁵ *Dial.* xlvi, xlvii.

⁶ *Ap.* i. lxv.

schismatical sects stands the one true fold of Christ, comprising those only who cling to the true faith. The fact that some who profess Christianity teach, not the doctrines of Christ but those of the spirits of error, causes us, who are disciples of the true and pure doctrine, to be more faithful and steadfast.¹ The Christian faith is one.

Christ warned His disciples to beware of heretics : " Many shall come in My name," He said, " clothed outwardly in sheep's garments, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." ² Heresiarchs are sheep become wolves, who retain the Christian name, the more readily to prey upon the fold from which they have been expelled. Justin contrasts them with the Christian teachers, whose mission and doctrines are from above. Christians, who give ear to heresy, act *irrationally* and allow themselves to be borne off from the fold as lambs by a wolf.³

Unlike heretics, all who are really Christians profess the same faith.⁴ This faith has been delivered to us by the Son of God, and is alone true.⁵ The divine Word is the sole principle of truth. Satan is the author of all unsound doctrines and practices. It is he who misleads men and raises up heretics. Those who abandon the true faith become the prey of godless doctrines and of devils.⁶ Heretics who do not repent are lost.⁷

¹ *Dial.* xxxv.

³ *Ap.* i. 58.

⁵ *Ap.* ii. 13.

² *Mt.* vii. 15.

⁴ *ib.* 26, 58 ; *Dial.* xxxv.

⁶ *ib.* i. 58.

⁷ *Dial.* xlvii.

EXCURSUS

Celsus and Origen.—Celsus, a pagan philosopher, published, about 178, a work entitled ἀληθὴς λόγος,¹ in which he denounced Christianity as a system of blind faith. Christians, he alleged, refuse to examine their principles. He professed to have made a thorough study of Christianity. “When I question them,” he writes, “I do not seek information, for I am conversant with all their opinions.” He will discuss the faith with them simply to convince them of its absurdity. But to no purpose: “they do not wish either to give or receive a reason for their tenets, but keep repeating μὴ ἐξέταζε ἀλλὰ πίστευσον—examine not but believe.”² He recommends that, in adopting religious beliefs, we should be guided, not by blind faith, but by reason (λόγῳ καὶ λογικῇ ὁδηγῶ).

It was not to be expected that an unbeliever would be quite fair in representing the position of his adversaries, and much of what Celsus writes of the deposit and the rule of faith is perfectly untrue. He states, for example, that Christians act irrationally; that they extol foolishness, and blindly accept *absurd* dogmas on the authority of presbyters who are no less ignorant than themselves. But, in

¹ Barden.: *op. cit.*, p. 147.

² Orig.: *contra Cels.* i. 9-12.

the main, his contention is just—namely, that Christianity is a deposit, an *authoritative tradition* transmitted through the presbyters; and that to reason about the intrinsic credibility or otherwise of truths of faith is contrary to the Christian spirit. In an age when Gnosticism was rife, and when the majority of Christians were unlettered, the motto *μὴ ἐξέταζε ἀλλὰ πίστευσον* had much to recommend it.

Justin an Innovator.—As an apologist, therefore, Justin Martyr was an innovator. His predecessors had been satisfied with an appeal to the evidences of Christianity. They established the divine mission of Christ by arguments based on prophecy and on miracles; and thus, assisted by grace, led men to the Church. Once a Christian was baptized, reason ceased to play a prominent part in his religious life. Doctrines and precepts were accepted by him as coming from Christ through the “presbyters,” and doubts as to intrinsic credibility were simply stifled.

Justin extended the domain of reason. Not satisfied with establishing the Messiahship of Jesus, and the divinity of Christianity, he undertook to *demonstrate* many truths of faith, and to establish the intrinsic possibility of others. He met pagan controversialists on their own ground and denied that, as Celsus and others had alleged, Christians would not and could not discuss the reasonableness of their opinions. In all this Justin Martyr was in advance of his time; his

writings mark a distinct development in Christian apologetics.

Celsus further condemned Christianity, as being an aggregate of conflicting sects. "In the beginning," he writes, "Christians were few in number and *held the same beliefs*, but when they grew to be a great multitude, they became divided and separated, each wishing to have his own party."¹ "Moreover," he continues, "they utter against each other dreadful blasphemies, saying all manner of things shameful to be spoken; nor will they yield in the slightest point for the sake of harmony, hating each other with a perfect hatred."²

Origen replied effectively. The existence of numerous heresies, he argues, furnishes no real basis of accusation against Christianity itself,—why should it? Is the true science of medicine to be condemned because of the existence of quacks?³

Christianity must not be confounded with heresy. Some who bear the Christian name deny that Yahve is the God of the Christians, and some distinguish between the "carnal" and the "spiritual"; but what does this avail against us who belong to the Church. These monstrous inventions are disapproved by the disciples of Jesus.

Celsus himself recognizes that there is a root-

¹ Orig.: *contra Cels.* iii. 9.

² *ib.* v. 63.

³ *ib.* iii. 12.

sect which he names the multitude (τὸ πλῆθος),¹ the great church (ἡ μεγάλη ἐκκλησία),² and from which all other sects have broken away. He recognizes, too, that, while diversity of belief characterizes the other sects,³ members of "the great church" have a common faith.⁴ But Origen emphasizes the fact that it is only members of the πλῆθος who belong to the Church and are really Christians.⁵ Hatred and disunion are rampant only among heretics. "We who are followers of the word of Jesus," he writes, "and who have accustomed ourselves to think and speak and act in harmony with His teaching, when reviled bless, when persecuted we suffer patiently, when defamed we entreat. We do not regard with hatred the corrupters of Christianity, nor utter things shameful against the heterodox, but rather use every exertion to raise them to a better condition. And if those who hold erroneous opinions refuse to be convinced, we observe the injunction laid down for the treatment of such: 'A man who is a heretic after the first and second admonition cast out.'"⁶

Over against all heretical sects and distinct from them stands the assembly of the disciples of Jesus, ἡ μεγάλη ἐκκλησία. Repudiating "inventions," these hold fast to an authoritative παράδοσις, transmitted to them from Christ through the

¹ Orig.: *contra Cels.* v. 61.

² *ib.* 59.

³ *ib.* iii. 10; v. 63.

⁴ *ib.* v. 59 *sqq.*

⁵ *ib.* v. 61.

⁶ *ib.* v. 63.

apostles and the "presbyters." In the eyes of pagans they were an unreasoning $\pi\lambda\hat{\eta}\theta\omicron\varsigma$. Heretics¹ and schismatics are condemned of themselves; they are outside the Church.² They are Christians only in name.

¹ Origen makes it clear that a heretic until "cast out" remains within the Church (v. 63).

² In each church those only were admitted to the Eucharistic meal who, having received baptism, subjected themselves to the hierarchy in matters of faith and of discipline (i. 66).

CHAPTER VI

THE ADVERSUS HAERESSES

ST. IRENAEUS was an Asiatic and a disciple of St. Polycarp. The date of his birth is uncertain ; but we know that, having spent his early years at Smyrna, in the society of his master and other "presbyters," ¹ he made his way to Rome about the middle of the second century. Afterwards, when a priest of the Church of Lyons, he was sent to Pope Eleutherus bearing a letter from the clergy of that city and of Vienne. The document, which dealt with the Montanist doctrines, referred to Irenaeus as having been "zealous for the testament of Christ." ² On his return from Rome, he succeeded Aurelius as bishop of Lyons (177-178).

Irenaeus was the author of many works of a controversial character. Of these the only one which has come down to us complete is his *Adversus Haereses* ³ an extensive tract in five

¹ i.e., immediate disciples of the apostles.

² Eus. *H. E.* v. 4. 2.

³ Its proper title is : "Ελεγχος καὶ ἀνατρεψὶς τῆς ψευδωνόμου γνώσεως," "Detection and overthrow of falsely-named gnosis." 19.

books, directed against the Gnostics. It was compiled during the period 180–198.¹

Doctrine.—The Gnostics made a Demiurge the principle of evil. Irenaeus, on the contrary, taught that all evil is traceable to man's abuse of free will,—to the fall of Adam. Man is free.² In Adam, as its juridical head, the race fell, by disobeying the Creator. A Saviour was necessary. "Then the Son of God, Who existed from the beginning—the same Who created all things . . . became incarnate; and summing up in Himself (*i.e.*, standing for) a long line of human beings, furnished us with salvation, so that what we had lost in Adam we recovered in Christ Jesus."³ The Word incarnate is another Adam, a new representative of the race; and, as by carnal birth we become children of Adam and, therefore, liable to death, so by our rebirth through baptism we become children of Christ and inherit life eternal.⁴ Men avail of the Redemption by faith. To be saved through Jesus we must accept the gospel promulgated by Him.⁵

¹ The work with the exception of a few isolated passages has not survived in the original Greek, but only in an indifferent, though slavishly literal Latin translation, executed shortly after publication of the original.

² iv. 37, *ib.* 3, 2; *ib.* 41, 2.

³ iii. 18, *ib.* 6, 3.

⁴ v. 1, 3; *ib.* 3; *ib.* 14, 1–3.

⁵ iv. 6, 5; *ib.* 1.

RULE OF FAITH

Scripture Authoritative but Insufficient.—The ‘word’ has come down to us by tradition, written and unwritten. The Scriptures, particularly the four gospels,¹ are reliable, since they record the teaching of the apostles and have been dictated by the Word of God and His Spirit.²

But Scripture, by itself, is insufficient as a rule of faith. The “dead letter” is powerless to crush heresy, even in those who admit, to say nothing of those who deny, the authority of the inspired text.

Those who grant its authority will not allow that their own position is unscriptural. They are quick to garble and pervert the written word, to support their views.³ Collecting a set of texts from various parts of Scripture, they give them an unnatural interpretation, to suit their theories. In this they remind one of those who bring forward any kind of hypothesis they fancy, and then proceed to find support for it in the Homeric ballads; “so that the ignorant imagine that Homer actually composed the verses on the hypothesis in question, although it has, in fact, been but recently constructed.”⁴

Against arguments drawn from Scripture they

¹ iii. 1 ; *ib.* 11, 7.

² ii. 28, 2.

³ i. 18, 19.

⁴ i. 9, 4.

raise all manner of difficulties.¹ When hard pressed, they appeal to new and unauthorised translations of the sacred text.² They even adduce a number of apocryphal and spurious writings, which they themselves have forged, to bewilder the minds of foolish men and of such as are ignorant of the Scriptures of truth.³ Genuine Scripture they examine, not to extract therefrom the truth, but rather to find in it some expressions which seem to favour their views. They are prompted to study the inspired documents more by love of their own opinions than by any desire to discover truth.⁴

Others, when confuted from the written word, profess to be guided, not by Scripture alone, but by Scripture read in the light of tradition: "When confuted from the Scriptures they turn round and accuse these same Scriptures, as if they were not correct or authoritative. The 'letter,' they allege, is in itself ambiguous; the truth cannot be extracted from it by those who are ignorant of tradition."

On the other hand, when confuted from that

¹ ii. 10, 2, 3.

² iii. 21, 3.

³ i. 20, 1. It is noteworthy that Irenaeus himself denied the inspired character of the epistle to the Hebrews, though he quotes from it (ii. 30, 9, *cfr.* Tixeront: *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. ii, pp. 229, 230). On the other hand, he regarded *The Shepherd* and *The Epistle of Clement* as Sacred Scripture.

⁴ iii. 11, 7.

tradition which has come down to us from the apostles, through the successions of presbyters in the churches, they claim to be wiser than either presbyters or apostles. 'The apostles,' they say, 'had not attained to the perfect gnosis.'¹ These men will follow neither Scripture nor tradition.²

Effective Rule of Faith.—The "letter" is, therefore, insufficient as a rule of faith. To deal effectively with heretics, we must confront them with *the apostolic tradition*.³ In interpreting Holy Writ we must allow ourselves to be guided by the "presbyters" among whom is the apostolic doctrine,⁴ and "who expound the Scriptures to us without danger."⁵

The "traditio" has come down to us from the apostles through the successions of bishops. It is, therefore, to be found in the important churches; or, to be accurate, in those churches of apostolic origin in which the episcopal lines have remained unbroken.⁶

¹ iii. 12, 7.

² *ib.* 1, 2.

³ "Ea quae est ab apostolis traditio" (iii. 3).

⁴ iv. 32, 1.

⁵ *ib.* 26, 5. And yet Irenaeus himself, interpreting the gospel narrative "in company with the presbyters" sets down the duration of Christ's *public ministry* as from ten to twenty years. Whom then, he asks, are we to believe; those who, ignoring the presbyters, say that Christ died a young man, or those who, with the presbyters, maintain that He was more than fifty years old when He suffered? (iii. 22).

⁶ iii. 3, 1.

We need not, however, examine the lists in the case of all the churches. It suffices to establish the continuity of the succession in the Church of Rome. Irenaeus explains: "Since it would be tedious . . . to reckon the successions in all the churches, we confute all those who for any reason (through self-pleasing, or vainglory, or through blindness and perverse opinion) assemble in unauthorized meetings,¹ [we confute all such men I say] by pointing to the tradition which the greatest and most ancient and universally known church,—founded at Rome by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul—holds from the apostles; and the faith which has been proposed to men and which has come down to our time through the episcopal successions."²

The Roman doctrine is, therefore, the catholic doctrine. He proceeds at once to give the reason: "*Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiores (potiores) principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio*"³

Let us first remark on some individual words and expressions in this much-disputed passage:

"*Principalitatem.*"—Many attempts have been

¹ "*Praeterquam oportet colligunt.*"—The last word is probably an awkward rendering of an original *παρασυνάγουσιν* (cfr. Migne in loc.).

² iii. 3, 2.

³ iii. 2.

made to conjecture the original. Bishop Wordsworth suggests ἀρχαιότης; ¹ others, with Migne, πρωτεῖον (πρωτεῖα); others again, with Harnack, ² αὐθεντία. The first of these suggestions scarcely recommends itself. The author's criterion of orthodoxy is, properly speaking, apostolicity rather than primitiveness. Besides the Roman Church was not the most ancient of the apostolic churches. Bishop Wordsworth appeals to chapter V, verses 14 and 21 as supporting his conjecture; but in both texts the original was probably ἡγεμονία rather than ἀρχαιότης, as appears from iii. 11, 8, where an original πρῶτον ζῶον ἡγεμονικόν is rendered: "primum animal principale." As between the other two—πρωτεῖον and αὐθεντία—it is more difficult to decide. Irenaeus uses the former of the Divine principality in iv. 38, 3 ³; while in i. 31, on the other hand, the Latin "a superiore principalitate" represents an original ἐκ τῆς ἄνωθεν αὐθεντίας. ⁴ It seems best, therefore, leaving open the question as to the exact original, to render "*principalitatem*" by "power," "authority," or, as Harnack suggests, ⁵ "sovereign authority." ⁶

¹ *St. Hippolytus and the Church of Rome*: p. 285.

² *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. ii, p. 157 n. In a paper read before the Royal Prussian Academy of Science, Nov. 9, 1893, Harnack argues with much force for an original αὐθεντία.

³ Gr.: πρωτεύει ἐν πᾶσιν ὁ θεός.

⁴ *cfr.* Migne *in loc.*

⁵ *Hist. of Dogm.*, *loc. cit.*

⁶ *cfr.* 1 Tim. ii. 12; Tert. *Adv. Valent.* iv.

Necesse est.—Of itself the phrase may imply any one of three distinct kinds of necessity :

- (a) *moral* (. . every church is bound to “convene” to Rome) ;
- (b) *logical* (. . because of . . . it follows that every church “convenes” . .) ;
- (c) “*ipso facto*” (. . every church which is orthodox by that very fact “convenes” . .).

Convenire ad.—Here, too, we discover three possible interpretations :

- (a) “come to” (. . every church must come to that of Rome) ;
- (b) “agree with” (. . every church must agree with that of Rome) ;
- (c) “have recourse to” (. . every church must have recourse to Rome [with a view to conformity with her]).

Omnam ecclesiam = unamquamque eccl. = every church.¹

* * *

Let us now consider the passage as a whole, which Protestants generally interpret thus: The Church of Rome was the central church of Christendom. Rome was the heart of the Empire, the world's metropolis. All roads led thither. The Roman Church held as regards doctrine a position of vantage. Meeting and conversing with brethren

¹ *cfr.* iii. 3, 1.

from the ends of the earth her members and hierarchy were able to compare their teaching and practice with those of all the other churches, and to adopt what was best and purest in the general tradition. Hence, as a doctrinal norm, the Roman teaching soon came to be regarded, rightly, as the most reliable in Christendom. In this view the passage would be paraphrased: For to this (Roman) Church, because of her more powerful principality (being the Church of the world's metropolis) every church—that is, the faithful from every quarter—necessarily (on business, &c.) ‘convenes’;—to this Roman Church, namely, in which the apostolic tradition has always been preserved *by those who come to her from every quarter* (. . . *in qua . . . ab his qui sunt undique*).¹

But the interpretation is quite at variance with the context and the argument. For Irenaeus every apostolic church is in possession of the true tradition *because its teaching has descended to it from one apostolic founder through an unbroken line of bishops*. “Orthodoxy through episcopal succession” is his cardinal principle. Is it likely, then, that the passage under consideration should be

¹ This is practically the interpretation adopted by Langen and by Funk (*cfr. Revue Bénédict.*, Oct., 1908): The brethren from all parts coming to Rome on business, while sojourning in the capital, compared their doctrines and practices with those of the Roman Church, and thus *conserved in her* the Catholic doctrine transmitted by the apostles to the churches everywhere. Harnack sets the interpretation aside as unlikely.

interpreted as implying that the reliability of the Roman teaching is to be ascribed to the influence of the faithful from every quarter? Has Irenaeus thrown his principles overboard? No; having established historically the continuity of the Roman bishops, he infers *therefrom* the soundness of the Roman teaching: "In this order," he writes, "and *by this succession* the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles and the preaching of the word have come down to us"; and at once he goes on to cite other apostolic churches¹ whose doctrines are sound and for a similar reason.

"Ad hanc . . . ecclesiam . . . necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam (hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles) *in qua* semper ab his qui sunt undique conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio." On this Harnack remarks: "In common with most scholars I used to think that the '*in qua*' refers to '*Roman Church*' (*hanc ecclesiam*); but I have now convinced myself that it relates to '*omnem ecclesiam*,' and that the clause introduced by '*in qua*' merely asserts that every church in so far as she is faithful—*i.e.*, orthodox, must as a matter of course agree with Rome. . . . The '*must*' (*necesse est*) is not meant as an imperative, but = ἀνάγκη = 'it cannot be otherwise.'"² He renders: The other churches (*i.e.*, the faithful everywhere) will neces-

¹ Those of Smyrna and Ephesus (iii. 3, 4).

² *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. i, p. 231.

sarily find themselves in agreement with the Roman Church by the very fact that, in them, the faithful everywhere have preserved the true apostolic tradition.

Harnack's view is rejected by Funk as involving an "impossible tautology"; Friedrich and others call it "absurd." Its very awkwardness condemns it; and it fails to explain why the alleged *ipso facto* agreement is attributed to a *potior* principalitas in an apostolic church.

A more generally received interpretation connects "*in qua*" with "*hanc (Romanam) ecclesiam*": "Every church must agree with this (Roman) Church in which the apostolic tradition has always been preserved." But the old difficulty recurs; it is contrary to the principles of Irenaeus to state that the apostolic tradition has been conserved in the Roman Church *by outsiders*. Bardenhewer translates "*in qua*" by "in communion with which;"¹ and Tixeront suggests: "in and through which,"² but neither rendering is acceptable. They seem to obviate a serious difficulty by doing violence to the text. Others retain the "in" and explain as follows: The other churches (*i.e.*, the faithful everywhere) by the fact that they have remained *in communion with her*, have always preserved *in the Roman Church* the apostolic tradition.³ The solution is

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 121.

² *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. i, p. 231.

³ *cfr. Revue Bénéd.*, xxv., pp. 515 *sqq.*

ingenious, but scarcely satisfactory ; it leaves us the ' impossible tautology ' involved in the second "*qui sunt undique*," and in addition fails to take account of the general argumentation.

Dom Morin suggests an emendation of the clause beginning: "*in qua . . .*" As it stands the whole reads: "*ad hanc ecclesiam . . . necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper, ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio.*" The second "*sunt undique*," he conjectures, slipped into the MS. through an error of the copyist, who, having just transcribed the words "*sunt undique*" after the first "*qui*," inadvertently repeated them after the second "*qui*" instead of some such words as "*ibi praefuerunt.*" As reconstructed, the passage reads: "Every church must agree with the Roman Church . . . in which the apostolic tradition has always been preserved by her rulers." Dom Morin's suggestion obviates the great difficulty which must be faced by anyone who connects "*in qua*" with "*hanc ecclesiam.*"

Reconstruction in this case is not a *deus ex machina*; the passage really demands it. All suggested explanations of the words as they stand have proved unsatisfactory. Not one of them has succeeded in harmonizing with the general argumentation. Further, in any view which retains the original text, the repetition of the words "*sunt undique*" is tautological and purposeless. We

note, finally, that 'slips' are rather numerous in the "*Adversus haereses*." Dom Morin instances several texts in which words have been erroneously transcribed or repeated.¹ Hence on purely critical grounds we seem to be justified in erasing the second '*sunt undique*' as intrusive.

This done, our task of interpreting the whole becomes comparatively easy. The intrusive clause may be a *substitution* or a *pure addition*.² If the latter, it seems best to take '*ab his*' as synonymous with "*deinde*" (= from the time of the apostles): "The tradition handed down by the apostles has always *from their time* been conserved in the Church of Rome."

On the whole, however, it appears more likely that the clause is a substitution. An examination of the author's usual practice in discussing the apostolic tradition³ and a consideration of his general principles would lead one to expect, antecedently, that the Roman bishops should have been referred to as guardians of the *traditio*. In fine, the accidental substitution of the intrusive words for some such words as "*ibi praefuerunt*" can be readily understood if we suppose that, in

¹ *cfr.* i. 14. 1 (*esse*); ii. 31. 3 (*conversationem*); iii. 19. 3 (*eum*.); iv. 21. 1 (*propter repromissionem Dei*).

² In which case it was probably a deliberate insertion to explain the obscure "*ab his*."

³ *cfr.* i. 10. 2; iii. 2. 2; *ib.* 3. 1, 3; iv. 26. 2, -5; *ib.* 33. 8; v. 20. 1.

the original MS. both clauses occupied corresponding positions in consecutive lines, thus :

Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potio-
rem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire
ecclesiam hoc est eos qui sunt undique
fideles in qua semper ab his qui * * * * *
conservata est. . . .¹

There remains the "*potentior principalitas* : " We have already decided that Irenaeus selects the Church of Rome as a type of apostolic church. Typical she is, but more than typical. All apostolic churches—for Irenaeus, I mean—have a doctrinal *principalitas*, in virtue of which their decisions are more authoritative than those of other churches.² The Church of Rome, being apostolic, has, therefore, a *principalitas* ; but hers is a *principalitas* which is *potentior* ; she is possessed of *pre-eminent* authority by reason of which *every* church must conform to her teaching.

Irenaeus had thus a special reason for examining the episcopal succession of the Roman rather than that of any other apostolic church. " Doubtless," writes Harnack, " his reference to the Roman Church is introduced in such a way that she is merely mentioned by way of example ; just as he

¹ *cfr. Revue Bénédict. loc. cit.*

² " Hence if there arise a dispute relative to some important question among us we should have recourse to the most ancient churches with which the apostles held intercourse (*in quibus apostoli conversati sunt*), and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the question at issue. Would not this have been our sole method of adjusting doctrinal differences had the apostles written nothing ? " (iii. 4. 1).

also adds the allusion to Smyrna and Ephesus ; but there is quite as little doubt that this example was no arbitrary selection. The truth rather is that the Roman community *must* have been named because its decision was 'already' the most authoritative and impressive in Christendom." ¹

¹ The word "already" is important. Harnack assigns an eminently "natural" basis for the *de facto* primacy which he here admits. The Church of the world's metropolis, he informs us, was at this time wealthy and influential. It was of the utmost importance to all communities, especially so long as they required financial aid, to be in connexion with that of Rome, to receive support from her, and to have the power of recommending prisoners and those who pined in the mines to her influential intervention. Fellowship with the Roman Church was "valuable." It was to be expected, however, that, as a necessary condition of mutual fellowship, she would require other communities to recognize the law (doctrinal and disciplinary, we presume) by which she regulated her own "circumstances" ; and so we find that during the second and third centuries many individuals and communities turned to Rome in order to testify their "orthodoxy." This and other causes (enumerated *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. i, p. 159) combined to convert the Christian communities into a real confederation under the primacy of the Roman Church.

Such, in substance, is Harnack's theory. As we have already I hope, satisfied ourselves that the "See of Peter" was from the beginning not only *de facto*, but *de iure* primatial, we do not feel called upon to examine at any length this fanciful explanation of a primacy which, as Harnack himself concedes, was "already" acknowledged by Christendom in the time of Irenaeus. The language of the passage under discussion, as well as the entire context and argumentation, imply that all churches conformed to the Roman, not because her fellowship was "valuable" in the sense explained, but because her teaching was more reliable and authoritative than that of any other church.

What, then, is the argument of the passage “ad hanc enim ecclesiam. . .”? It is a question more readily put than answered; but there are two interpretations which seem to be, let us say, less unsatisfactory than others that have been suggested. One connects “in qua” with “hanc ecclesiam,” the other with “omnem ecclesiam.”¹

Accepting Dom Morin’s emendation we connect “in qua” with “hanc ecclesiam” and render the passage: “For every church (*i.e.*, the faithful from every quarter) must² conform to³ the Roman Church because of her pre-eminent authority (—the Roman Church) in which the apostolic tradition has always been preserved by her rulers.”

But if the reconstruction be ruled out of court, we are, I fancy, forced⁴ to connect ‘in qua’ with

¹ Duchesne, Funk, and Harnack (latterly) connect *in qua* with *omnem ecclesiam*.

² We have already shown that there is not question of mere *ipso facto* necessity. If “*necesse est*” represents an original *δεῖ* there is question of moral necessity (every church *is bound to conform to Rome*); if the original was *ἀνάγκη* the necessity is merely logical (*it follows that every church conforms to Rome*). The use of “*necesse est*” in v. 30. 1, where the original was *εἰς αὐτὴν ἐμπεσεῖν ἀνάγκη τὸν τοιοῦτον* leads us to think that here, too, the original was probably *ἀνάγκη* rather than *δεῖ*.

³ This seems to be the meaning of “*convenire*.” Irenaeus in the next chapter uses “*recurrere*” as signifying “*to conform to*.”

⁴ To avoid the inconvenience of implying that orthodoxy is maintained *in* the Roman Church (*in qua*) by outsiders (*ab his qui sunt undique*). We have already criticised the renderings suggested by Bardenhewer, Tixeront and others.

‘*omnem ecclesiam*’ and interpret: For with this church, because of her pre-eminent authority, every church (*i.e.*, the faithful from every quarter) in which the apostolic tradition has always been preserved (by the faithful from every quarter) must agree.”¹

General Argument of the Passage.—To heresy Irenaeus opposes the catholic tradition. This, he asserts, is found in the apostolic churches. As a type of apostolic church he selects the Roman, and establishes historically the continuity of her episcopal succession. But he selects her not merely as a type. Like all apostolic churches, the *Ecclesia Romana* has a *principalitas*; but as distinct from them she has a *potentior principalitas* by reason of which every church must conform to her.

Heretics are, therefore, confounded by the Roman teaching, first because it is the true tradition (*proof*: the line of Roman bishops is unbroken); and secondly because it is the catholic teaching (*proof*: all the churches must agree with her). Irenaeus selects an apostolic church because apostolicity is a guarantee of orthodoxy; he selects the Roman rather than any other apostolic church because her teaching is catholic.

In practice the church of the metropolis was regarded by all Christians as constituting a

¹ Those who hold for this interpretation have to explain why the expression “*qui sunt undique*” is so awkwardly repeated, and also why “*undique*” is not “*ubique*.”

primatial see. Even Harnack concedes that her decision was "already" regarded as the most authoritative in Christendom.¹ Her primacy was acknowledged not alone by the faithful from every quarter, but even by heretics.² Irenaeus himself acknowledged it.³

It is only when he sets himself to *theorize* about criteria of orthodoxy, that he becomes obscure. His primordial principle seems to be that apostolicity in *any individual* church guarantees the teaching in that church. Theoretically, this principle may imply a denial of a doctrinal primacy to any see; but, if this be so, Irenaeus appears not to have adverted to the fact until, in pursuance of his principle, he came to examine a type of apostolic church. Then the figure of the Roman Church loomed large before him. *She* had a doctrinal primacy. Irenaeus himself acknowledged it in practice; Christendom acknowledged it. The principle of the Roman primacy had, therefore, to be upheld by him side by side with his theory of "apostolicity a guarantee of orthodoxy"; and so, while, consistently with his primordial principle, he attributes the orthodoxy of the teaching found in the Roman Church to her

¹ *v. supra.*

² *cfr.* Batiffol : *op. cit.*, p. 208 ; Harnack : *Hist. of Dogm.* : vol. *cit.*, pp. 159, 159 ; *Mission*, vol. i, pp. 370 *sqq.*

³ *cfr.* his journey to Rome as representative of the clergy of Lyons and of Vienne (*supra*), and his letter to Pope Victor regarding the Paschal controversy (*infra*).

apostolic foundation *plus* the continuity of her episcopal succession ; inconsistently, it may be,¹ with the same principle, he ascribes to her teaching a higher degree of reliability than attached to that of other apostolic churches ; and argues that, in consequence of her *potentior principalitas*, the teaching of all the churches must square with hers. The reasoning perhaps is defective ; its coherency may be questioned ; but consistently or inconsistently, he proclaims the Roman primacy.²

In his interesting work on St. Hippolytus, Bishop Wordsworth has something to say to the " Romish " interpretation of this celebrated passage. Let us briefly review his criticism.

" The inference (that all men are bound to submit to the Church of Rome) is," he writes, " at variance with the drift of the argument. St. Irenaeus is refuting heretics by an appeal to the

¹ Irenaeus lays it down that every unbroken line of bishops reaching back to the apostles is a channel of the true tradition ; but it does not follow that every individual channel conveys the stream in full measure and with perfect purity, although at first sight this might seem to be implied by passages like iii. 3. 1, 2, 4 ; iii. 4 ; iv. 26. 2 ; *ib.* 5.

² Duchesne sums up the import of the entire passage as follows : " Il est difficile de trouver une expression plus nette :

- (a) De l'unité doctrinale dans l'Église universelle ;
- (b) De l'importance souveraine, unique, del' Église romaine comme témoin gardienne et organe de la tradition apostolique,
- (c) De sa prééminence supérieure dans l'ensemble des chrétientés (*Églises Séparées*, pp. 118, 119).

witness of the Church Universal. He has selected one church as an exponent of that testimony. The church so selected is the Church of Rome. He argues that in appealing to the Church of Rome he has virtually collected the witness of all. . . ."

True ; but how does Irenaeus show that the teaching of the Roman Church represents that of all the churches ? " By reminding them," Dr. Wordsworth replies, " that the succession of Roman bishops from Peter and Paul to his time was unbroken."

We have made it clear, we hope, that the saint's *immediate* purpose in establishing the continuity of the episcopal succession in the Roman Church, was to infer therefrom not the *catholicity* but rather the *orthodoxy* of her teaching. The orthodox faith was, of course, catholic as well ; but then its catholicity followed, not from the continuity of the Roman succession, but rather from the oneness of the apostolic tradition, and from the fact that all the churches must conform to Rome. Hence, having traced the unbroken line of bishops from Linus to Eleutherus, he proceeds *at once* to infer, not the identity of catholic with Roman doctrine, but simply the truth of the latter. " In this order," he writes, " and by this succession *the apostolic tradition* which is in the Church and the *true preaching* have come down to us." ¹ The " Church " is either the

¹ Gr. τῇ αὐτῇ τάξει καὶ τῇ αὐτῇ διαδοχῇ ἥτε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ παράδοσις καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας κήρυγμα κατήντηκεν εἰς ἡμᾶς (cfr. Hegesippus *infra*).

Roman Church, of which he has just been speaking, or the Church Universal.

“What does he say,” Dr. Wordsworth proceeds to inquire, “in the words : ‘*ad hanc ecclesiam propter potentio rem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam hoc est omnes (sic) qui sunt undique fideles ?*’ ” . . . “It is not stated,” he replies, “that every one, then and for ever after must submit to the Church of Rome. No. If that had been true, then, he would not have said that ‘*because it would be tedious to appeal to all churches*’ he would, therefore, appeal to one church—the Church of Rome. Such a statement would have been absurd if Rome had been supreme over all churches and if all churches were bound to conform to her. . . .”

To which we reply that the statement in question becomes perfectly intelligible the moment we admit that Irenaeus selected the Church of Rome *as a type of apostolic church*.

“ . . . It is possible, and almost certain,” he continues, “that where we now read in the Latin ‘*necesse est*,’ St. Irenaeus wrote *ἀνάγκη*.” Granted. “The Greek word *ἀνάγκη*, it is well known, often implies *a reasonable inference* (‘it follows that . . .’), not a moral obligation.” Also granted. “ . . . Hence Irenaeus did not affirm any moral obligation constraining all men to submit to the Church of Rome. . . .”

But, we ask, what *did* he affirm ? On Dr. Wordsworth’s own showing he declared that all

churches conform to Rome, and that this general conformity is a *necessary consequence* of her *potentior principalitas*. That the expression "necesse est" does not, of itself, necessarily imply moral obligation we admit.

" . . . Romish divines," he adds, "base their doctrine of the primacy upon the alleged foundation of the Roman Church by St. Peter.¹ Irenaeus on the other hand attributes her *potentior principalitas* to her foundation by SS. Peter and Paul."

This portion of the learned prelate's criticism is quite irrelevant. The passage under discussion proclaims the doctrinal primacy of the Roman Church. This we undertake to show, and nothing further. That she owes that primacy exclusively to St. Peter is neither affirmed nor denied by Irenaeus.² It is worthy of note, however, that, in a later chapter, the saint assigns as the reason of the doctrinal disunion among heretics and schis-

¹ The statement is inaccurate. 'Romish' divines do not base the doctrine of the primacy upon the foundation of the Roman Church by St. Peter, but rather upon his episcopacy in that Church. With all the early fathers, including Irenaeus himself, we hold that, whereas the Roman Church was founded by SS. Peter and Paul, Peter alone was the first Roman bishop (*cf. supra*, ch. v, p. 1).

² " . . . The special importance which Irenaeus claims for the Roman Church . . . is not merely based by him on her assumed foundation by Peter and Paul, but on a combination of the four attributes '*maxima*,' '*antiquissima*,' " etc. (Harnack : *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. i, p. 157 n).

matics the fact that “ they have not been founded on *the one rock*.” How strangely like an echo of Matthew xvi. Irenaeus, we should add, was a close student of the first Gospel.¹

Christianity a Deposit.—The Church is the sole reliable repository of the apostolic tradition. In her is found the true creed or symbol (κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας).² The κανὼν is unchangeable (ἀκλινής).³

She holds not only the symbol or summary of defined teaching but *the entire deposit*: “ Like a rich man depositing his money in a bank, the apostles lodged in her hands . . . *all things pertaining to the truth*.”⁴ They also constituted her the sole authoritative exponent of the deposit in succession to themselves; “ so that every man, whosoever will, can draw from her the water of life.”⁵ The deposit is conserved, transmitted, and authoritatively interpreted, by the Catholic bishops. It is not susceptible of change.⁶

The Church the Body of Christ.—The Church is a visible organic unit controlled by the episcopacy. “ True knowledge⁷ is [derived from] the teaching of the apostles, and the ancient constitution (σύστημα) of the Church in the whole world, and

¹ *cfr.* iii. i. 1; *ib.* 9. 1–3.

² I. 9. 4. Irenaeus enumerates the articles of the κανὼν (*ib.* 10. 1).

³ *ib.*

⁵ *ib.*

⁴ iii. 4. 1.

⁶ i. 10.

⁷ Gr. γνῶσις ἀληθείας.

the character of the body of Christ according to the successions of the bishops into whose hands the apostles have delivered the Church which exists in every place.”¹ The Church Universal is a single association ruled by the bishops collectively. As *such* it is the Body of Christ.

The Indwelling of the Spirit.—The Holy Spirit abides in the Church. In her capacity of guardian and exponent of the deposit she is assisted and renewed by Him. Sustained by His abiding presence she endures indefectible.²

It is only the body of Christ that is animated by the Holy Spirit ; to share in the Spirit we must be members of the body. “For in the Church God hath set apostles, prophets, teachers, and all the other means through which the Spirit works ; of Which those are not partakers who do not belong to the Church. . . . For where the Church is there is the Spirit of God ; and where the Spirit of God is there is the Church.”³ All who belong to the Church, and those only, partake of the Spirit.

Church Membership.—But who, *in concreto*, are they who partake of the Spirit ? Who are members of Christ’s body ? . . . “The Spirit, Irenaeus replies, “is the living water which the Lord grants

¹ iv. 33. 8. A difficult sentence. I have rendered it literally as far as possible.

² iv. 31. 3.

³ iii. 24. 1.

to those who *rightly believe in Him and love Him.*"¹ By 'love' he means love as manifested in social unity.²

Heresy and Schism.—We are saved through the truth. But the truth has come down to us through the episcopal succession (*διαδοχή*), and is found *only in the Church*. She alone possesses the true tradition, the saving 'wisdom' of God which she preaches everywhere.³ Hence, to be saved, we must remain within the Church in subjection to the episcopacy: "Wherefore it is incumbent to obey the presbyters who are in the Church; those who, as I have shown, possess the succession of the apostles; those who together with the succession of the episcopate have received the certain gift of truth (*charisma certum veritatis*)."⁴ . . . Where the gifts of the Lord have been placed, there it is incumbent to learn the truth—namely, from those who possess that succession of the Church which is from the apostles."⁵

Heretics and schismatics have fallen from the truth. The former "bring strange fire to the altar of God—namely, strange doctrine. They shall be burned up by fire from heaven as were Nadab and Abiud. And such as rise up in opposition to the

¹ v. 18. 2.

² iv. 33. 7, 8. *cfr.* Migne *in loc.* We shall find SS. Cyprian and Augustine adopting a similar mode of speech (*cfr.* Cypr. *De unit. eccl.* xiv; Aug. *De bapt.* iii. 16, 21).

³ v. 20. 1.

⁴ iv. 26. 2.

⁵ *ib.* 5.

truth, and exhort others against the Church of God, shall be damned (remanent apud inferos). . . . Those who cleave asunder and disrupt the unity of the Church shall be punished by God as was Jeroboam.”¹

Schism is absolutely inexcusable: “He shall judge those who give rise to schisms, who are destitute of the love of God, and who look to their own advantage rather than to the unity of the Church, and who . . . cut in pieces and divide the great and glorious body of Christ. . . . The mischief (βλάβη—pernicies) of their schism,” he adds, “more than counterbalances any reformation (κατόρθωσις) which can be brought about by them.”² Irenaeus was not a “reformer.”

Heretics and schismatics are outside the Church: “He shall also judge all those who are beyond the pale of the truth, that is, who are outside the Church.”³ The saint contrasts heretics with those who belong to the Church—i.e., who are subject to the episcopacy. “Polycarp coming to Rome,” he relates, “caused many to turn away from heresy to the Church of God.”⁴ “Now all those heretics,” he argues in another place,⁵ “are of much later date than the bishops to whom the apostles committed the churches. . . . It follows, then,

¹ iv. 26. 2.

² “*Nulla ab eis tanta potest fieri correctio quanta est schismatis pernicies*” (iv. 33. 7).

³ *ib.*

⁴ iii. 3. 4.

⁵ v. 20. 1.

as a matter of course, that these heretics, since they are blind to the truth and deviate from the right way, walk in various roads, and, therefore, in the domain of doctrine their footsteps are scattered here and there without agreement or connexion. But the path of those who belong to the Church circumscribes the whole world, as possessing the sure tradition from the apostles and gives unto us to see that the faith of all is one and the same.”¹

Heretics themselves not only admit their separation from the Church, but boast of it. They refer to “those of the Church” as being “psychics,” “animal”-men who have not attained to the perfect “gnosis.”² They profess to have arrived, by their reasoning powers and erudition, at a grasp of Christian truth, which the “psychic” who accepts the faith *solely on authority* knows not of. And yet, precisely because they refuse to accept the Christian teaching on authority, precisely because they refuse to regard it in the light of an authoritative tradition, the gnostics “know much,” but blaspheme God. The gospel is a διδαχή and not a “wisdom.”³

Summary.—Christianity is a κανών, a παράδοσις. It is an authoritative tradition which we receive

¹ v. 20. 1. The early Christian writers never tire of contrasting the doctrinal disunion existing among heretics with the unity which obtains within the Church.

² οἱ ψυχικοὶ . . . μὴ τὴν τελείαν γνῶσιν ἔχοντες . . . εἶναι δὲ τούτους ἀπὸ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἡμᾶς λέγουσιν.

³ ii. 26. 1.

from Christ through the apostles and their successors. The dispersed churches constitute one Church controlled by the Catholic episcopacy and with Rome as rallying-centre.

The Church Universal is the body of Christ ; we are its members. The Holy Spirit animates the entire Church and only the Church ; to share in the Spirit we must be members of the Body.

Schism is indefensible. Heresy, too, is sinful and separative ; heretics are outside the Church : " Wherefore it is incumbent to hold in suspicion those who depart from the primitive succession and assemble in any place as heretics or schismatics." ¹ We must guard ourselves lest we suffer injury from such. When they assail us the Church is our sole safeguard. " Let us fly to her and be brought up in her bosom." ²

Testimony of Hegesippus.—Hegesippus, an oriental who lived during the latter half of the second century, compiled an historico-polemical work in five books entitled : πέντε ὑπομνήματα. His purpose was to set forth *in extenso* the orthodox teaching (ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος). The work has perished, with the exception of some passages which have survived in Eusebius.³

For Hegesippus, as for his predecessors, the

¹ iv. 26. 2.

² " . . . confugere autem ad ecclesiam et in eius sinu educari " (v. 20. 2).

³ *H. E.* iv.

παράδοσις is the norm of truth. He puts forward "the true tradition of the apostolic doctrine" (ἡ ἀπλανὴ παράδοσις τοῦ ἀποστολικοῦ κηρύγματος) as being the ὀρθὸς λόγος.¹ Hence he visited many churches and examined their doctrines; having first satisfied himself as to the continuity of the episcopal succession in each. In all apostolic churches he found one and the same teaching.²

It is clear, therefore, that Hegesippus regarded apostolic tradition as the sole norm of orthodoxy, the purity of the tradition being conditioned by the continuity of the succession of bishops in the churches. Since the tradition is one, it follows that all apostolic churches wherein the episcopal lines (αἱ διαδοχαί) have remained unbroken, have a common teaching. Christianity is one and apostolic.

To constitute a sect in an apostolic church (as had been done in the Church at Jerusalem) is to divide the unity of the Church, by corrupt doctrines against God and against His Christ.³ Schism is never lawful; to break with the διαδοχή is to break with the ὀρθὸς λόγος.

THE EASTER CONTROVERSY ⁴

The primitive church was divided as to the time at which the festival of Easter should be celebrated. We have already seen how Polycarp and Pope

¹ *H. E.* iv. 8. 2.

³ *ib.* 22. 5, 6.

² *ib.* 21. 1.

⁴ *circ.* 191 A.D.

Anicetus tried in vain to come to an understanding on the question.¹ "The churches of Asia," writes Eusebius, "guided by a remoter tradition, supposed that they ought to keep the fourteenth day of the moon; ² . . . and it was incumbent on them to make an end of the fast on this day on whatever day of the week it should happen to fall. The churches throughout the rest of the world, on the other hand, did not terminate the fast on any other day but the day of the resurrection of our Saviour."³ Apostolic sanction was claimed for each custom, the Easterns appealing to the practice of SS. John and Philip, the others to that of SS. Peter and Paul.

The disagreement was felt to be intolerable. Western Christians sometimes found themselves in sack-cloth and ashes at a time when their brethren in the East were feasting. "Hence there were synods and episcopal convocations on the question; and all unanimously decreed . . . that the mystery of our Lord's Resurrection should be celebrated on no other day than Sunday."⁴

"The Asiatic bishops, however, continued to observe the custom handed down to them from their fathers."⁵ In this they were led by Polycrates, the venerable bishop of Ephesus. A conflict with Rome followed.

¹ *v. supra.*

² *i.e.*, 14th Nisan.

³ Eus. *H. E.* v. 23.

⁴ *ib.*

⁵ *ib.*

Pope Victor called on Polycrates to assemble the bishops of Asia, with a view to having the Western custom adopted throughout the entire province. Polycrates did so,¹ and subsequently forwarded to the Pope the decision of the assembly in a letter in which he set forth "the tradition derived down to his own times."² "We observe the genuine day," he wrote, "neither adding to nor taking from (the tradition). For in Asia great lights have fallen asleep: Philip, one of the Twelve, . . . John, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord, . . . Polycarp, bishop and martyr, . . . Thraseas of Eumenia;—all these observed the feast on the fourteenth day, introducing no innovations, but exactly following the rule of faith."³ For Polycrates, therefore, it was a clear case of Victor *versus* the *κανών*; and to "conform" was to disobey God. "I, therefore, . . . am not at all alarmed at those things which are threatened⁴ in order to intimidate me.⁵ For they who are greater than I have said: 'We ought to obey God rather than men.' . . . I could also mention the bishops that were present, whom you asked me to summon and whom I did summon."⁶ It was a flat refusal.

¹ In itself a noteworthy fact.

² τὴν εἰς αὐτὸν ἐλθοῦσαν παράδοσιν.

³ μηδὲν παρεκβαίνοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸν κανόνα τῆς πίστεως ἀκολουθοῦντες.

⁴ οὐ πτόρομαι ἐπὶ τοῖς καταπλησσομένοις.

⁵ Implying, as we shall see, that Victor had threatened "non-conformists" with excommunication.

⁶ *ib.*

Punishment followed. "Upon this Victor endeavoured to cut off as heterodox from the *common* society¹—and not merely from the Roman communion—the churches of all Asia, together with the neighbouring churches; and he sent letters abroad proclaiming that all the brethren there were excommunicated (*ἀκοινωνήτους*). Some of the bishops, however, who did not approve of² this step, immediately exhorted him to contemplate that course which was calculated to promote peace, unity, and fraternal charity."³

The bishop of Rome claimed the power to cut off churches from the catholic communion. The claim was suffered to pass unchallenged, although the principle involved was patent. Several of the bishops did not like his action; many expostulated;⁴ some rebuked him sharply;⁵ in their judgment he should have acted more forbearingly. But his power to excommunicate the churches no

¹ ἀποτέμνειν ὡς ἂν ἑτεροδοξούσας τῆς κοινῆς ἐνώσεως.

² ἀλλ'οὐ πᾶσί γε τοῖς ἐπισκόποις ταῦτ' ἡρέσκετο: (Lat. "*Sed hoc non omnibus placebat episcopis*"). The current Protestant translation: "But this was not *the opinion* of all the bishops" is unfair. The word ἡρέσκειν (c. dat. pers.) means "to please" simply (cfr. Lidd. and Sc.).

³ H. E. ib.

⁴ ἀντιπαρακελεύονται, which Dr. Schwartz, unfairly I think, renders "iubebant" (*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*: Eus. b. ii, t. 1, pp. 494, 495). I would suggest "hortabantur." ἀντιπαρακελεύεσθαι means "to exhort to the contrary" (cfr. Lidd. and Sc.).

⁵ πληκτικώτερον καταπτομένων.

one questioned. How are we to account for this if Victor was not the recognized primate of Christendom. If the Roman Pontiff was known to have acted *ultra vires* on that occasion, was there, in all Christendom, no member of the episcopacy to stand up and tell him so? Further, some of the letters of protest which reached him implicitly acknowledge his claim in the matter. Irenaeus, for example, writing in the name of his suffragan bishops, declared for the Roman custom, but advised¹ the Pope not to cut off entire churches whose sole offence was their fidelity to the *κανών*.² If Irenaeus believed that Victor was powerless to excommunicate the churches, the advice tendered by him was not only meaningless, but ridiculous. No wonder Renan remarked that the papacy was already "born and well born."³

¹ παραπειλ.

² *ib.*

³ Bat. : *op. cit.*, p. 225.

CHAPTER VII

ST. CYPRIAN, BISHOP AND MARTYR

THASCIUS CAECILIUS CYPRIANUS was born in proconsular Africa of wealthy heathen parents at the dawn of the third century.¹ A rhetorician by profession, he remained a pagan until his forty-sixth year. He then embraced Christianity, became a cleric, and, two years subsequently, was elected to fill the important metropolitan see of Carthage. He suffered martyrdom during the Valerian persecution, September 14, 258.

Cyprian's episcopal career was a stormy one. To begin with, his election was contested ; and his opponents appear to have maintained an attitude of avowed hostility towards him even after his consecration. Occasions of vilification were not wanting from the first. During the Decian persecution (249-251) the saintly bishop abandoned his church, and remained in concealment, that his flock might not be left shepherdless in its hour of stress and trial. From his place of refuge he was able to control diocesan affairs by means of letters. His enemies, however, not unnaturally, availed themselves of the incident to level against him a

¹ *circ.* 200-210.

charge of cowardice ; ¹ and a letter has come down to us written by the Roman clergy to the Church of Carthage, in which they undertake to justify the "flight" of "the blessed pope Cyprian." ²

During the persecution numbers of the Christians denied the faith. Some offered sacrifice or burned incense to the pagan idols, and were known as *sacrificati* or *thurificati*. Others refused to sacrifice, but purchased *libelli* attesting that they had done so. These were named *libellatici*. While the storm was still raging, Cyprian was called upon to lay down the law which should regulate the treatment of such weaklings. In doing so he introduced an important change into the existing ecclesiastical discipline.

The early Church was unwilling, as a rule, to reconcile the *lapsed*. That a "saint" could sin gravely, despite his regeneration, was in the beginning considered almost unthinkable, and when such cases arose,—as, from the first, they *did* arise,—the clergy, at least in some parts of the Church, exhorted the sinner to do penance, but left his reconciliation in the hands of the Creator. The penance proclaimed by Hermas was a mere *transient* concession, an exceptional privilege granted only to his contemporaries and to be availed of but once. It was a kind of jubilee. ³

¹ Ep. xx.

² *ib.* viii. 1.

³ *cf.* O'Donnell : *Penance in the Early Church*, p. 5 ; Tixeront : *Hist. of Dogm.*, vol. i, p. 112.

As time went on, the discipline became relaxed and ordinary sinners were freely admitted to the Sacrament of Penance. Right through the first two centuries, however, the Church consistently refused to deal with what were known as the "*peccata ad mortem*"—apostasy, fornication and murder. These crimes remained "irremissible."

In maintaining this rigorous attitude, the ecclesiastical authorities, we hold, were actuated solely by motives of discipline, and not by any conviction that the Church's power of binding and loosing did not extend to *delicta graviora*. This is clearly proved by the action of Pope Callixtus, who, in the beginning of the third century (217–222) enacted that fornicators who had performed a specified penance were to be reconciled and admitted to communion after the manner of ordinary sinners.¹

We note, in passing, the fact that on this occasion the Roman Pontiff took upon himself to legislate for the entire Church. Furthermore, we find that in order to establish the authoritative character of his enactment *he alleged the power of the keys transmitted by the prince of the apostles to his successors the Roman bishops*.² The measure, it is true, was at first badly received in certain rigorist quarters—notably in Africa;³ but the

¹ Tert. : *De Pud.* i.

² *ib.* 21. cfr. Tix., vol. *cit.*, p. 343.

³ Cypr. : *Ep.* lv. 21.

opposition was shortlived. Before the middle of the century the decree of Callixtus was being acted upon in practice by the clergy everywhere.

The Decian persecution was the occasion of a further mitigation of the penitential discipline. While Cyprian was still a refugee, numbers of those who had apostatised at Carthage expressed a desire to be reconciled, and, to facilitate their return to communion, many obtained from the martyrs or confessors letters which were known as *libelli pacis*. Some of these, it would seem, not only *recommended* the bearer to the indulgence of the clergy, but actually *demand*ed his unconditional restoration; not a few adding the words: "cum suis."

Recognizing that they had no authority to move in a matter of such importance, some of the priests requested Cyprian to allow them to admit to communion unconditionally all bearers of *libelli pacis*. Cyprian refused, declaring that the entire question should be allowed to stand over "until the Lord would send them peace," when he would consider it in conjunction with his clergy and people.¹

The priests, as a body, upheld the decision. But some, acting independently and "with contempt of the bishop,"² admitted bearers of *libelli* to communion, without penance of any

¹ Ep. xiv. 4.

² Ep. xvi. 1.

kind.¹ Cyprian once more intervened to reassert his authority, but also to make an important concession. While condemning the disobedience of his priests, and the presumption of the martyrs and confessors in demanding the unconditional restoration of the lapsed, he permitted bearers of *libelli* who had done penance to be reconciled when *in extremis*.²

Cyprian immediately wrote to the Roman clergy³ explaining the facts of the case, and requesting them to give their formal support to his decision. The Romans replied by a cautiously-worded letter,⁴ in which, while associating themselves in the main with his principles, they refrained from expressly sanctioning the reconciliation of apostates. The document was composed by the rigorist Novatian.

At Carthage the decision was badly received by the majority of those concerned. The malcontents were led by the deacon Felicissimus and by the priest Novatus. All efforts to move the saintly bishop were unavailing ; he would make no further concessions. The lapsed, he insisted, should await his return from exile, to have their case examined.

¹ " Ante actam poenitentiam ante exomologesim gravissimi atque extremi delicti factam ante manum ab episcopo et clero in poenitentiam impositam " (Ep. xv. 1).

² Ep. xx. 3.

³ The Roman See was at this time vacant. Pope Fabian had just suffered martyrdom (January 20, 250).

⁴ Ep. xxx.

But his enemies in the city had ulterior designs. Felicissimus had organized his party into a schismatical church, and now threatened to cut off from communion all who submitted to the rigorism of Cyprian.

The schismatics were, of course, liberal in their treatment of the *lapsi*, and admitted them to communion freely and unconditionally. Cyprian ridiculed their action: "Men who are themselves excommunicate and outside the Church," he writes, "offer communion to others." ¹

At this juncture the Roman See was about to be filled; and the party of the lapsed at Carthage strained every nerve to secure the election of a pope who should aid them against their lawful bishop. Novatus was dispatched to Rome to support the candidature of the presbyter Novatian; but the scheme proved abortive, the rival candidate Cornelius being elected. The discomfited party at Rome thereupon set up Novatian as anti-pope, and constituted themselves a schismatical church. ²

Cyprian's condemnation of the Novatianists was unqualified. In his eyes to break with the legitimate pope was to break with the Catholic Church. ³ In order to assist the Roman clergy in their struggle with the schismatics he composed his celebrated tract: "*De Unitate*."

¹ Ep. xliii. 5.

² At first they were merely schismatical. Later they erred in doctrine by holding the irremissibility of the sin of apostasy.

³ Epp. xliv. 1; xlv. 1, 3.

ECCLESIOLOGY

The Church Local.—For Cyprian as for his predecessors, the local church is a visible society, ruled by a three-fold hierarchy composed of a monarchical bishop, a college of presbyters and deacons.

The bishop is the rock-foundation of the local church; ¹ supreme control vests in him. It is he who excommunicates ² and restores to communion. ³ He acts as supreme judge in all matters of ecclesiastical discipline. Heretics and schismatics—and the same is true of mere *lapsi* ⁴—he reconciles by a judicial sentence following upon a judicial investigation. ⁵ The bishop, having been elected by the clergy and people, is ordained by other bishops, ⁶ and receives his pastoral authority “from above,” *per successionum vices*. ⁷ A bishop who lapses becomes permanently degraded.

In the eyes of Cyprian the *plebs* constitute a rather important factor in the government of the local church. They have the power to elect worthy bishops and to refuse the ministration of the unworthy: *Ipsa maxime habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes vel indignos recusandi*. ⁸ They have

¹ Ep. xxxiii. 1.

² *ib.* xli. 2.

³ *ib.* xlix. 2.

⁴ *cfr.* *De lapsis* xvi.

⁵ Ep. xlix. 1-3.

⁶ *ib.* lv. 5.

⁷ *ib.* xxxiii. 1.

⁸ *ib.* lxvii. 3.

a voice in the restoration of *lapsi*, heretics and schismatics,¹ and they help to decide questions of discipline which affect the welfare and good name of the community as a whole.²

In theory Cyprian seems occasionally to hold for the independence of the local church. A bishop, he proclaims, is not amenable to his fellows but to God.³ His practice, however, was at variance with this. He recognized the legitimacy and authority of provincial councils. Twice yearly he himself presided over the celebrated council of Carthage which controlled the entire province. Cyprian was in fact primate of Africa. "As the See of Rome was the 'See of Peter,' " writes Tixeront, "so also that of Carthage was in the fourth century the See of Cyprian."⁴ Provincial councils were quite common in his time and earlier.⁵ The great churches—Rome, Lyons, Alexandria, Carthage, Caesarea, Ephesus, etc.—constituted rallying-centres for the churches of their respective areas. Individual bishops were bound by the decrees of provincial councils,⁶ and could even be deposed by them.⁷ In practice, too, as we shall see, Cyprian recognized the Roman primacy of jurisdiction.

¹ "Cum petitu et conscientia plebis": Epp. lxiv. 1; xxxiv. 3.

² Ep. xiv. 4.

³ cfr. *Acta. Conc. Carth.* (256), sect. i; Epp. xxxiii. 1; lix. 1, 14; lxvi. 8; lxxi. 3; lxxii. 3.

⁴ *Vol. cit.*, p. 356; cfr. S. Opt. ii. 10.

⁵ Epp. lix. 10; lxxiii. 1.

⁶ *ib.* i. 1, 2; lxiv. 1, 2.

⁷ Ep. lix. 10.

The Church Universal.—The great churches themselves held together. They had a common *κανών*, to which bishops everywhere were obliged to conform. For Cyprian Christianity is a *traditio Dei*, which stands over against *alienae doctrinae et magisteria humanae institutionis*.¹ Disagreement in matters of faith was reprobated; and, even in the domain of discipline, uniformity was felt to be desirable. Thus, when the Roman clergy wrote to their Carthaginian colleagues to say that penitent *lapsi* might be “assisted” *in extremis*, Cyprian replied informing them that he had upheld their judgment: “I deemed it well,” he said, “to stand by your decision, lest our proceedings, which ought to be united and to agree in all things, should in any respect be different.”² Subsequently, as we have seen, he was careful to obtain the sanction of the same presbyters for his method of dealing with the Carthaginian malcontents. The clergy, he said, should follow a common plan in administering the Church.

About this time he wrote to warn the Romans against intercourse with a certain Privatus of Lambesa, a heretic who had been condemned for many crimes.³ The presbyters replied commending his vigilance, and assuring him that they had previously known of the character of Privatus and had dealt with him accordingly: “You have acted

¹ *De Unit.* xix.

² *Ep.* xx.

³ *ib.* lix. 10.

as you usually do," their letter runs, "in informing us of the matter as being an object of anxiety. For it behoves us all to guard (*excubare*) the body of the whole Church, whose members are to be found throughout the various provinces. But the deceitfulness of that crafty man was not hidden from us even before we had your letter; for previously, when a certain Futurus, a standard-bearer of Privatus, came and desired to obtain letters from us, we were neither ignorant who he was nor did he obtain the letters."¹ These were commendatory letters which, when obtained from any church, secured the bearer admission to fellowship and communion in any other church. Travellers who failed to produce "letters" were excluded from communion; and, if clerics, were not allowed to officiate. There was, therefore, a Church of churches which was a social unit. The Christian communities constituted a league in opposition to heresy. The bishops "who guarded the body of the whole Church" did not guard it solitarily; for the withholding of commendatory letters closed the Church doors against those who were excommunicated wherever they travelled. There was thorough and effective organization; so that it does not surprise one to find that, when an important see is filled, the Catholic bishops are notified that the newly-elected colleague may be recognised by them.²

¹ Ep. xxxvi. 14.

² *cfr.* Epp. xlv. 3; lv. 8.

The unity of the Church is based on unity of the episcopate.¹ To disrupt this unity by schism is never lawful.²

DE CATHOLICAE ECCLESIAE UNITATE

The title of this celebrated tract is somewhat misleading. It has to do primarily, not so much with Catholic as with local ecclesiastical unity. Cyprian composed it, as we have seen, on the occasion of the Novatian crisis; his main purpose being to establish the oneness of the cathedra in each Church. "Does any one believe," he asks, "that in one place there can be either many shepherds or many flocks."³

Argument.—Christians should be at once simple and prudent; to secure salvation we must beware of Satan's wiles and keep the commandments of the Master. Cyprian explains: "The devil, finding himself unable any longer to fill his fanes with idol-worshippers, has devised a new fraud, and under the very title of the Christian name deceives the incautious. *He has invented heresies and schisms*, to subvert the faith, to corrupt the

¹ Epp. iv. 24; xxxvi. 4; lxiii. 1.

² Ep. lx. 1.

³ *De Unit.* viii. We follow Hartel's critical text. By doing so, however, we do not intend to pass judgment on the so-called papal interpolations which are found in the tract "*De Unitate*," and which Hartel omits. The spurious character of the "interpolations" is, to say the least, doubtful.

truth, and to divide the unity. Those whom he cannot keep in the darkness of the old way, he circumvents and deceives by the error of a new way. *He snatches men from the Church itself.*"¹

The saint proceeds to make good his contention. Christ, he argues, began by naming one apostle as the rock-foundation of His Church, and the shepherd of His flock. Why? Not, he assures us, that He intended to invest any one apostle as such with authority over the others,—He endowed all with the same power,²—but "that He might show forth unity." In other words Christ was not satisfied to found the Church on the apostles collectively. Instead, He founded it on a single apostle, in the first instance, to inculcate the principle of local unity in and through subjection to a single bishop; and, incidentally, the principle of catholic unity as "beginning with one." Such would seem to be the saint's interpretation of the words of promise (Mt. xvi).³

¹ *De Unit.*, i.—iii.

² *ib.* iv. ". . . Apostolis omnibus . . . parem potestatem tribuit. . . . Hoc erant et ceteri apostoli quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi et honoris et potestatis."

³ We confess it is difficult to be certain about the exact meaning here; the passage is obscure. We have given what, in view of certain statements in the epistles—especially xxxiii. 1; lxxiii. 7; lxxvi. 8—we consider to be the argument. Batiffol asserts that "in the eyes of Cyprian, Christ's words to Peter mean only that each church is one since the first of all the churches, that founded by Christ on Peter, is one" (*op. cit.* p. 358). Tixeront, on the other hand, inter-

But there is also a unity of units ; because the Catholic hierarchy is one and undivided. The Episcopate is one ; it is held conjointly by the bishops.¹ From this unity of the Episcopate springs the unity of the Catholic Church. “ The Church which is Catholic and one is not cut nor divided, but is connected and bound together by the cement of the ‘ presbyters,’ who cohere with one another.” If one member of the episcopal body prove false to his trust, his colleagues take care to provide for his flock.²

The Church is one as a tree which has extended its branches far and wide. A branch lopped off from the trunk is unable to bud. Christianity has diffused itself over the whole world. “ The Church is one mother, plentiful in the results of fruitfulness : from her womb we are born, by her milk we are nourished, by her spirit we are animated.”³

She is the bride of Christ ; He has begotten us of her. She cannot be adulterous. He is her sole consort, she is His only spouse : “ She knows one home ; she guards with chaste modesty the sanctity of one couch. . . . Those therefore who have not the Church for their mother, have not God for

prets the passage in *De Unitate* as implying that Christ symbolized the unity of the Church Universal by founding it on Peter, and bestowing on him alone, in the first instance, the power He was later on to grant to the others (*op. cit.* vol. i., p. 357).

¹ “ Episcopatus unus est cuius a singulis in solidum pars tenetur ” (*ib.* v.).

² Ep. lxviii. 3.

³ *De Unit.*, v.

their father. They are strangers, they are profane, they are enemies.”¹

Cyprian's *De Unitate* is the last word on heresy and schism: “He who does not hold the unity of the Church does not hold God's law, does not hold the faith of the Father and Son, does not hold life and salvation.”² The Church is an ark of Noë; to remain without is to perish.³

The Church is the assembly of those who hold one and the same faith in subjection to the bishops. Schismatics separate themselves: “It is not we who have withdrawn from them, but they from us.”⁴ Heresies are permitted by God as means of ridding the Church of undesirables. “Let no one imagine that the really good can depart from the Church.”⁵ The wind does not carry away the wheat; it is only the light straws that are tossed about by the tempest; it is only the feeble trees that are blown down by the whirlwind. Heresy approves the faithful and discovers the perfidious.⁶

The presumption of heresiarchs is diabolical. Of their own accord and without any divine arrangement they set themselves up as bishops: “They assume to themselves the name of bishop, although no one has conferred on them the episcopate.”⁷ A bishop is consecrated by having the

¹ *De Unit.*, vi.

³ *ib.*

² *ib.*

⁴ *ib.* xii.

⁵ *Nemo existimet bonos de ecclesia posse discedere.*

⁶ *ib.* ix-x.

⁷ *ib.*

episcopate communicated to him by men already possessed of it. Consecration by heretical and schismatical bishops is absolutely null (μάταια). There is no episcopate outside the Church.¹

Those pseudo-bishops sit on thrones of pestilence. Artful in corrupting the truth, they vomit forth death-dealing doctrines. Their speech is a deadly poison ; it eats like a cancer.²

The Church is the exclusive repository of the blessings derived to us from Christ. She alone dispenses His grace. For Cyprian this is a first principle. Outside the Church there are no sacraments, no salvation. The axiom : " Extra ecclesiam nulla salus " was formulated by him.³

He has already referred to the invalidity of heretical baptism. " Heretics and schismatics," he says, " claim to baptize, although there can be no other baptism but one. They forsake the fountain of life, and yet promise the grace of living and saving water." But their pretensions are hollow. " Men are not washed among them, but rather befouled." ⁴

The principle applies all round. Their Masses, too, are invalid : " What sacrifices," he asks, " do those who are opposed to the presbyters think they celebrate ? Do they deem that they have Christ with them when they are collected together outside

¹ *cfr.* Eus. *H. E.* vi. 43. 10.

² *De Unit.* x.

³ Ep. lxxiii. 21.

⁴ *De Unit.* xiii.

His Church ? ” ¹ We may add here that Cyprian is inclined to go even farther, and to make the validity of the sacraments—at least of the Eucharist—depend on the *probity* of the minister.²

The sin of schism is inexpiable.³ Even martyrdom is powerless to save seceders. Though they give themselves up to flames and fires ; though they be thrown to the wild beasts ; it is to no purpose ; their suffering is not the crown of faith, but the punishment of perfidy. They may be slain ; crowned they cannot be.⁴

Separatists are *vitandi* : “ Whoso separates from the Church is to be turned away from and avoided. Such a one is perverted and sins, and is condemned of his own self. Does he think that he has Christ who acts in opposition to Christ’s presbyters, who separates himself from the fellowship of His clergy and people ? He bears arms against the Church ; he acts in opposition to God’s appointment. An enemy of the altar, a rebel against Christ’s sacrifice, for the faith faithless, for religion profane, a disobedient servant, an impious son, a hostile brother, despising the bishops and forsaking God’s priests, he dares to set up another altar to profane the truth of the Lord’s offering by false sacrifices, and

¹ *De Unit.* xiii.

² *cfr.* Ep. lxvii. 2, 3.

³ “ *Inexpiabilis culpa discordiae ; macula ista nec sanguine abluitur* ” (*ib.* xiv).

⁴ *ib.* xiii.

disdains to recognise that he who opposes the divine appointment is punished for his temerity.”¹

The condition of the schismatic is much more serious than that of the Christian who has merely lapsed. The latter has sinned but once, and seeks re-instatement; the schismatic, on the contrary, sins daily, and resists the Church. Martyrdom, too, may save the lapsed; it cannot save the schismatic.²

In fine, Cyprian bases the absolute unlawfulness of schism on the *corporate* unity of the Church. “God is one,” he writes, “and Christ is one, and His Church is one, and the faith is one, and the people are joined together into a substantial unity of body by the cement of concord. Unity cannot be severed; the body cannot be divided.”³

Summary.—Christ arranged that in each church there should be but one see. Hence Christians are strictly bound to subject themselves to their legitimate bishop. Every church is a social unit. Schism is inexcusable.

All the churches form together one Church. The Catholic bishops are united in opposition to heresy and schism. The episcopate is one and undivided. To break with a local church is to break with the Church Universal.⁴

The Church is the sole repository of grace;

¹ *cfr.* Ep. xvii.

² *ib.* xix.

³ *ib.* xx. iii.

⁴ *ib.* xliii. 7.

she alone holds the means of salvation. For Cyprian the rule, "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" admits of no exception.¹ Schism is thus absolutely sinful, for two reasons : first, because ignoring Christ's positive arrangements ; secondly, because suicidal.

THE BAPTISMAL CONTROVERSY.

Towards the close of his life, Cyprian became involved in an important controversy concerning the validity of heretical baptism.

So long as heretics refrained from organising separate communities the question as to the validity of their baptism did not arise. They were baptised by ministers of the true Church, and were reconciled by a simple imposition of hands *unto penance*.² Baptism was not repeated.

But, with the formation of independent sects, the mode of procedure to be followed in reconciling heretics became more difficult to determine. Was the Church to rebaptize those who came to her from an heretical sect, and who had been baptised by an heretical minister ; or was she to

¹ *cfr.* Epp. iv. 4 ; lv. 24 ; xli. 2.

² The " *impositio manuum*," in this case, did not confer the Holy Ghost. It was only those who had been baptized and confirmed outside the Church who were reconfirmed on their return to communion (*cfr.* Ep. lxxi. 2). The early Church, which admitted the validity of baptism administered by heretics, regarded their confirmation as invalid.

admit them to communion by a simple imposition of hands ? It was a practical problem ; to solve it was to pronounce on the value of heretical baptism.

The Church was slow in coming to a decision. So late as the third century we find that Christendom was pretty evenly divided in its adherence to two conflicting practices. The Churches of Rome,¹ Alexandria,² and Palestine,³ at that time reconciled by a simple imposition of hands ; while those of Africa,⁴ Syria,⁵ Phrygia,⁶ Cappadocia, and the neighbouring provinces,⁷ declared against the validity of heretical baptism, and accordingly used the baptismal rite together with an imposition of hands in the ceremony of reconciliation.⁸

For a time, apparently, this serious diversity in practice was regarded with general indifference. As in the Easter controversy, individual churches were left to follow their own custom, catholic unity remaining intact.

The seeds of disunion were there however. A

¹ *Philosoph.* ix. 12 ; *Cypr. Epp.* lxii. 3 ; lxxiv. 1, etc. ; *Eus. H. E.* vii. 3.

² *cfr.* *Jer. De vir. illustr.* lxix.

³ *Eus.* vii. 2, 3.

⁴ *Cypr. Epp.* lxx-lxxv.

⁵ *Ap. Constit.* vi. 15.

⁶ *Eus. H. E.* vii. 7, 5.

⁷ *Cypr. Ep.* lxxv. 7, 19.

⁸ The practice of rebaptising heretics would appear to have arisen as a result of the adoption of the doctrines of Tertullian in certain quarters. *cfr.* *Tert. : De Bapt.* xv ; *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, tom. ii., p. 219.

council of African bishops, held about the year 200,¹ and presided over by Agrippinus, one of Cyprian's predecessors and a contemporary of Tertullian, pronounced heretical baptism null and void.² Other councils held about the same time in Asia Minor and Syria, and the Councils of Iconium and Synnada, held later during the period 222-235,³ gave similar decisions.⁴

Cyprian brought matters to a head. A layman named Magnus had consulted him as to "whether they who come from Novatian ought, after his profane washing, to be baptised and sanctified in the Catholic Church." Cyprian, following his master,⁵ Tertullian, replied in the affirmative: "Heretics and schismatics," he declared, "have no power, no right."⁶

The reasons he adduces in this and other letters to establish the nullity of heretical baptism, are numerous and weighty: The Church, he argues,

¹ Tixeront, following Leclercq, gives 198 (approx.) as the year (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 368). Batiffol puts it about twenty years later. Bareille (in *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*), following the author of the *Philosophoumena*, gives 218-222.

² Ep. lxxiv.

³ Bat. : *op. cit.*, p. 381.

⁴ Eus. *H. E.* vii. 7; *cfr.* Tixeront, vol. *cit.*, p. 368; *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, tom. ii, p. 220.

⁵ Jerome tells us that so great was Cyprian's respect for the opinions of Tertullian that he was wont to refer to him as "the master" (*De vir. ill.* liii).

⁶ Epp. lxix ; lxx. 1 ; lxxi. 1.

is the sole repository of grace and of the means of grace ; she is an enclosed garden which is not open to strangers and profane persons. She is a sealed fountain ; he who is placed without has no access to the spring ; he cannot drink thence nor be sealed ; he cannot be quickened and sanctified from that water of which those only who are within can make use or drink. The Church alone has the power of baptising and cleansing. She alone has the living water.”¹

The Lord Himself has instructed us to regard as pagans and publicans those who will not hear the Church.² Hence we cannot allow that heretics and schismatics validly administer the Christian sacraments. How can any one cleanse and sanctify the waters of baptism who is himself unclean and devoid of sanctity ? Besides, those who receive baptism are anointed “that they may have in them the grace of Christ.” Now, the oil of unction, like the Eucharist, is sanctified on the altar. There can thus be no baptismal anointing among heretics ; having no altar they can neither sanctify the oil nor celebrate the Eucharist. Finally, baptism administered by heretics is *manifestly* of no value ; how can a minister who is himself dead quicken others ?³ Heretics are equally incapable of

¹ *cfr.* Epp. lxix. 2, 3 ; lxxiii. 7, 10-12 ; lxxiv. 11 ; lxxv. 11, 16.

² Ep. lxix. 1.

³ *cfr.* Epp. lxx. 1, 2 ; lxix. 8 ; lxxi. 1. The reader will have no difficulty in discovering in these epistles the seeds of Donatism.

receiving the sacraments. None receive grace save such as hold the true faith.¹

Baptism, he argues further, is a regeneration ; it makes us sons of God. How, then, can heresy, which is not the spouse of Christ, confer baptism ? How can it generate sons to God by Christ ? The Church alone is the Spouse of Christ ; she alone bears sons to God ; she alone baptizes.²

But Cyprian bases his strongest argument on the admission of his opponents, that *heretics cannot give the Holy Ghost*. If those who have been confirmed in heretical sects are reconfirmed on the occasion of their reconciliation, why inconsistently withhold rebaptism in their case ? If heretical confirmation is invalid, as is acknowledged, how do we contend that heretical baptism is valid ? If those who are outside the Church can baptise, they can confer the Holy Ghost ; if they cannot give the Holy Ghost, they cannot baptize.³

To the objection that the nullity of confirmation conferred by heretics does not justify us in inferring the nullity of their baptism, since the invalidity of their confirmation is due solely to the fact that they do not possess and hence cannot give the Holy Ghost, he replies : It is no less true that those who do not possess the Holy Ghost cannot remit sin and therefore cannot baptise.⁴ Christ

¹ Ep. lxxiii. 4, 5.

² Ep. lxxiv. 6.

³ Ep. lxxiv. 15.

⁴ For Cyprian a sacrament to be valid must be fruitful.

said : " Receive ye the Holy Ghost whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them." But the Holy Ghost is found only in the Church. Heretics and schismatics, therefore, are powerless to baptize, as they are powerless to confirm.¹

Finally, Cyprian, like his opponents, appeals to tradition. The custom of rebaptising heretics, he affirms, is of long standing in the Church, and was formally sanctioned by an African Council many years previously. He is careful to explain the custom. Those heretics who have been baptized in the Church are not rebaptised ; in their case the ceremony of reconciliation consists in a simple imposition of hands *unto penance*. Why ? " Because," he answers, " they are already sheep." On the other hand, heretics who have been baptised and confirmed outside the Church, and who, on that account, are not really sheep, are reconciled by baptism and an imposition of hands. The water which makes sheep is found only in the Church.²

Cyprian is not perturbed to find that his opponents appeal to an older custom to prove the validity of heretical baptism. " It is in vain," he writes, " that some, in opposing us, appeal to custom *when they find themselves overcome by reason*." The custom they adduce is not apos-

¹ Ep. lxi. 10, 11.

² *ib.* lxxi. 2.

tolie ; ¹ there is not a particle of evidence to show that the apostles recognized the validity of heretical baptism. Besides, he adds, customs should never be followed blindly : *non est de consuetudine praescribendum sed ratione vincendum.*² “ Who is so foolish,” Firmilian asks, “ as to prefer custom to truth ? ” ³

All the logic and all the consistency seemed marshalled on the side of the Primate of Africa ; and yet it was the cause of his opponents which triumphed ultimately : the illogical and inconsistent practice prevailed. Cyprian had the African custom formally sanctioned by a largely-attended council held at Carthage in the autumn of 255, and by another held in the spring of 256, and forwarded the acts of both to Pope Stephen. His covering letter was injudicious in form, no less than in substance. The tone was not only independent but impertinent—if we may say so. “ We have brought these things to your knowledge, dearest brother,” he wrote, “ for the sake of our mutual honour and sincere affection, believing that, according to the truth of your religion and faith, those things which are no less religious than true

¹ Note how Cyprian (Ep. lxxiv. 10) and his supporters (Ep. lxxv. 19), like all the Fathers, stood by the principle of the *traditio apostolica* as the last word in matters of belief and of discipline.

² Ep. lxxi. 3.

³ Ep. lxxv. 19. *cfr.* Bat. : *op. cit.*, pp. 385, 386 ; *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, vol. ii, p. 221.

will be approved by you. But we know that some will not lay aside what they have once imbibed, and do not easily change their purpose; but keeping fast the bond of peace and concord among their colleagues, retain certain things peculiar to themselves, which have once been adopted among them. In which behalf we neither do violence to nor impose a law upon any one, since each prelate has in the administration of the Church the exercise of his free will as he shall give an account of his conduct to the Lord.”¹

Stephen's letter of reply has, unhappily, perished; but the gist of it may be gathered from the following extract, quoted by Cyprian in his letter to Pompey: “Among other things,” he wrote, “Stephen added this saying: ‘If any one, therefore, come to you from any heresy whatever, let nothing be innovated which has not been handed down; to wit, that hands be imposed on him *unto penance*;’² since heretics themselves in their own proper character do not baptize such as come to

¹ Ep. lxxii. 3.

² What is the significance of the words “*in poenitentiam*”? Are they a ‘slip’ for “*in Spiritum Sanctum*”? Probably. The meaning, we have no doubt, is that those who were baptized and confirmed in an heretical sect—never those who were baptized and confirmed in the Church—were reconciled by an imposition of hands that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Cyprian and Firmilian base their main argument on Stephen's admission that heretics who have been confirmed in heresy should be confirmed anew on admission to the Church.

them from one another, but only admit them to communion.' ” ¹

It was a thunderbolt. Cyprian had written to emphasise the principle of episcopal independence, Stephen had replied by laying down the law for Cyprian himself and for his colleagues everywhere.

But more than this. The Pope had struck at the very roots of Independency ; he had proclaimed the Roman primacy of jurisdiction. He had put himself forward as a bishop of bishops *in virtue of his position as successor and heir to St. Peter*. It was intolerable : “ I am justly indignant,” writes Firmilian, “ that he who so boasts of the *locus* of his episcopate, and contends that he is successor to St. Peter on whom the foundations of the Church were laid, should acknowledge other rock-foundations and other churches, through defending by his authority the validity of their baptism.” ²

Cyprian resolved to hold out ; he and his colleagues would not surrender to arrogance and despotism. No time was to be lost. The discussion of the validity of heretical baptism was formally re-opened at a Council held at Carthage

¹ Ep. lxxiv. 1. The Pope held for the efficacy of the Sacramental rite *considered in itself* (Ep. lxxv. 9). He taught that the efficacy of the rite is due to Christ's presence therein and to His sanctifying intervention (lxxv. 12). We shall find this doctrine analysed and developed by St. Augustine (*v. infra*).

² Ep. lxxv. 17.

a few months later (September, 256), when the old principles were defiantly reasserted : " It remains," said Cyprian, addressing the assembled prelates, " that upon this same matter each of us should bring forward what he thinks, judging no man nor rejecting any one from the right of communion, if he should think differently from us. For neither does any one of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops, nor by tyrannical terror does any compel his colleague to the necessity of obedience ; since every bishop, according to the allowance of his liberty and power, has his own proper right of judgment and can no more be judged by another than he himself can judge another." ¹

Cyprian recorded his own judgment as follows : " The letter which was written to our colleague Jubaianus very fully expresses my opinion that, according to evangelical and apostolic testimony, heretics, who are called adversaries of Christ and Antichrists, when they come to the Church, must be baptized with the one baptism of the Church, that they may be made of adversaries, friends, and of Antichrists, Christians." ²

What followed is important. The Pope, we know, forwarded his decision to all the bishops ; but did he excommunicate dissenters ? Possibly. He certainly *threatened* to do so.³ It is, however,

¹ *Acta. Conc. Carth.* (256), sect. i.

² *ib. fin.*

³ *cfr. Eus. H. E.* vii. 5.

doubtful, to say the least, whether he subsequently gave effect to his threat.

This is a question of fact simply, and should be investigated dispassionately. It matters little what the findings may be. Catholic historians appear to us to attach undue importance to the matter. They assume that if the Pope in the case excommunicated Cyprian and the other bishops who advocated re-baptism, the dissenting churches became schismatical. This is a mistake. We hope to show in our concluding chapter that a church or an individual is not rendered schismatical by excommunication.

As to the question of fact it is difficult to make up one's mind ; but the arguments which have been adduced to show that the Pope on this occasion actually excommunicated the dissenters are on the whole unconvincing, particularly when it is remembered that they are based almost exclusively on statements of his opponents. Firmilian's letter unquestionably creates difficulty. Batiffol, we notice, cites it as supporting the view that Stephen's threat remained a threat, but the document appeals to us as implying rather the contrary: "Stephen," it runs, "has had the audacity to break the peace against you."¹ What are we to understand by a rupture of the peace, if

¹ Quod nunc Stephanus ausus est facere rumpens adversus vos pacem (Ep. lxxv. 6).

not excommunication? In another passage,¹ he charges the Pope with having refused communion to the delegates of dissenting bishops. However, everyone understands that statements of this kind found in a document which from beginning to end is a bitter invective, should be received with reserve.

Duchesne seems undecided: "Étienne," he writes, "avait menacé de rompre les rapports de communion. Donna-t-il suite à sa menace? Nous n'en savons rien."² But we are not left entirely to conjecture. Cyprian himself appears to suggest that the Pope merely *contemplated* excommunication: "*Sacerdotes Dei veritatem Christi et ecclesiae unitatem tuentes abstinendos putat.*"³ Augustine states expressly that a breach was averted: "Vicit pax Christi," he writes, "in cordibus eorum ut in disceptatione nullum inter eos malum schismatis oriretur."⁴ In this he is strongly supported by Eusebius,⁵ as well as by Facundus bishop of Hermiane in Africa, who, in his polemical treatise—"Liber contra Mocianum Scholasticum," composed about 571—states that in the Stephen-Cyprian controversy there was no anathematizing.⁶

¹ Ep. lxxv. 25. ² *Égl. Sép.*, p. 147. ³ Ep. lxxiv. 8.

⁴ *De Bapt. contra Donat.* v. 26, 36. *cfr. De unico Bapt. contra Petil.* xxiii.

⁵ *H. E.* vii. 5.

⁶ Nullius anathematis interpositione (Migne *P. L.* t. lxxvii).

Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, declared for the African custom. Supported by his colleagues from Phrygia, Galatia, Cilicia, and the neighbouring provinces, he addressed to Cyprian an epistle¹ in which he set forth at length his views on the value of heretical baptism. His arguments are practically those of Cyprian. Bishops, he contends, have received from Christ through the apostles the power of conferring the sacraments. Hence without the hierarchy baptism cannot be validly administered or received: "All power and grace are established in the Church where the elders preside who possess the power of baptizing, of imposing hands, and of ordaining."²

Like Cyprian, Firmilian holds for a united episcopate—united despite certain differences in matters of discipline. The diversity in practice in the mode of reconciling heretics he does not deem sufficiently serious to justify a breach of the Catholic peace.

With the death of Stephen friendly relations were gradually re-established between the Holy See and the dissenting churches. The new Pope, Xystus II, while adhering to the Roman custom, did not feel called upon to take strong action against those who still repudiated heretical baptism. Like his colleagues,—including Dionysius of Alexandria, an ardent supporter of St. Stephen³—he seems to

¹ Ep. lxxv.

² *ib.* c. 7.

³ *cfr.* Eus. *H. E.* vii. 2, 5, 7.

have regarded the question as of secondary importance, and so the great controversy was allowed to drop. Shortly afterwards the Roman custom came to be adopted by the See of Carthage and by the entire African Church.¹

THE ROMAN PRIMACY

Cyprian gave more thought to the discipline and government of the local Church than to the ultimate principles of Catholicity. He was a man of action rather than a theologian, and seems never to have thought out for himself the ultimate principles of that episcopal unity of which he speaks so much.

The Church is one, he holds, because the episcopate is one; but there is no bishop of bishops as there was no apostle of apostles.² He knows that the words of promise Matthew xvi, 17, were addressed to Peter alone; but in his letters³ as well as in the tract *De Unitate*⁴ he explains the passage as implying, not a primacy of jurisdiction in Peter and his successors, but simply the oneness of the Church Catholic and Local. It is a forced interpretation, but it seems to be the only one put forward by St. Cyprian. This should be conceded.

¹ *cfr.* Tixeront, *vol. cit.*, pp. 375 *sqq.*

² *De Unit.* iv; Epp. lxxi. 3; lxxii. 3; lxxiii. 6.

³ *cfr.* Epp. xxxiii. 1; lix. 7, 14; lxvi. 8; lxxi. 3; lxxii. 7.

⁴ cc. iv-vi.

And yet he proclaims the primacy. The Roman See he refers to as "the mother and root of the Catholic Church" (*Ecclesiae Catholicae matrix et radix*);¹ to communicate with the lawful Pope is to hold the unity of the Catholic Church.² The Roman Church is the See of Peter; she is the *ecclesia principalis unde unitas sacerdotalis exorta est*.³ Rome is the source and centre of Catholic unity.

This was acknowledged in practice by the saint himself and by the Church generally. Even heretics and schismatics accepted "the Roman fact." We find, for example, that the party of the lapsed at Carthage, having set up Fortunatus as bishop,⁴ and having been condemned by the African Council, dispatched the renegade deacon Felicissimus to Rome, to have the sentence of condemnation set aside and to make certain charges against Cyprian. The Pope wrote to the latter asking him to explain matters.

It is significant that Cyprian in his reply does not question the legitimacy of the Roman Pontiff's interference in the case; but merely expresses "surprise"⁵ that Cornelius should have allowed himself to be influenced by the calumniators. "When a bishop," he writes, "has been appointed to fill the place of one deceased, when he is chosen

¹ Ep. xlviii. 3.

² *ib.*

³ *ib.* lix. 14.

⁴ *ib.* 11.

⁵ *ib.* 2.

in time of peace by the suffrage of an entire people ; . . . a man who remains faithfully linked with his colleagues ; . . . who is proscribed in time of persecution, and has been again and again demanded in the circus "for the lions"—when such a one is assailed, dearest brother, it is manifest who assails him."¹

He is aware that, in ordinary circumstances, a bishop whose see becomes threatened by schism, or by other dangers, should *at once communicate with Rome*. Hence he feels called upon to excuse his delay in reporting the affair of Fortunatus. In his eyes, he explains, it was a mere trifle : " But that I did not immediately write to you, dearest brother, about Fortunatus . . . the matter was not such as ought at once and hastily to be brought under your notice, as if it were great or to be feared. I did not think it necessary that all the follies of heretics should be at once made known to you, because it is beneath the dignity of *the Catholic Church* to concern itself with every audacity which heretics and schismatics may attempt among themselves." ² Is this the language of equal addressing equal ?

Fortunatus and his party had just acknowledged the Roman primacy. Condemned by an African Council they had appealed to Cornelius. Cyprian felt the slight : " These men," he writes, " not

¹ Ep. lix. 6.

² *ib.* 9.

satisfied with their other crimes, have dared to set sail and to bear letters from schismatic and profane persons to the throne of Peter and to the chief Church (*ecclesia principalis*)¹ whence priestly unity flows.”² What is the meaning of this appeal? he asks. The African bishops have decreed that the case of everyone should be tried where the crime has been committed; and each bishop is amenable to God alone. What then do the renegades insinuate by appealing to the Pope when they have been judged and condemned by an African Council? Do they consider our authority insufficient (*minor*)?³

Cyprian here denies to the schismatics the right of appeal, and yet his very letter of protest proclaims the Roman primacy. The Pope’s right of interference in the affairs of the Church at Carthage he does not question; he excuses his delay in having details of the affair of Fortunatus forwarded to the *cathedra Petri*. Finally, the letter reveals the important fact that the Carthaginian schismatics had appealed to the Roman Pontiff from the decision of an African Council.

But some four years later⁴ an incident occurred which showed still more clearly how, in practice, Cyprian acknowledged a real primacy in the Roman Pontiff. Marcian, bishop of Arles, having

¹ The reader will at once recall the “*potior principalitas*” of Irenaeus.

² Ep. lix. 14.

³ *ib*

⁴ *circ.* 255.

opposed the episcopal body on the question of the reconciliation of the lapsed, Cyprian wrote to Stephen asking him to have the recalcitrant prelate deposed and a successor appointed.¹ These are his words: "Wherefore it behoves you to write a very copious letter to our fellow-bishops appointed in Gaul, not to suffer any longer that Marcian, forward and haughty, and hostile to the divine mercy and to the salvation of the brotherhood, should insult our assembly, because he does not yet seem to be excommunicated by us. . . . Let letters be directed by you to the province and to the people abiding at Arles, by which Marcian being excommunicated another may be substituted in his place." ² Cyprian *normal* seems to accept "the Roman fact" as a matter of course.

In the autumn of 254 he presided at a council of the African bishops, which might seem at first sight to have repudiated the primacy of the Pope: Two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martialis, having been deposed for grave crimes, submitted their case to Rome and obtained from Pope Stephen a sentence of restoration. The Spanish Churches concerned, together with the newly appointed prelates, Sabinus and Felix, thereupon appealed to the Council of Carthage and had the Pope's decision reversed.³

¹ We should add that the bishops of Gaul had asked the Roman Pontiff to deal with Marcian.

² Ep. lxviii. 2, 3.

³ 254.

But it was not really a case of overriding a decision, in the ordinary sense. Cyprian and his council simply gave it as their considered judgment that Basilides and Martialis had been justly deposed, and declared that Stephen's decision in the case might be set aside without scruple, on the grounds that it had been based on insufficient knowledge of the facts.¹ However, while the appeal of the deposed bishops to Rome and the Pope's sentence of restoration show that the primacy was at that time acknowledged and claimed, the further fact that the Spanish churches subsequently appealed to the Council of Carthage against the Pope's decision shows, we admit, that in certain quarters the principle of the primacy was as yet inadequately grasped.

Conclusion.—For Cyprian the Church is a body. It constitutes a single organization controlled by a united episcopate: schism is never lawful.

But, while holding strongly for an organized episcopate, united in opposition to heresy and schism, he seems never to have fully grasped the true principle of Catholic unity. If individual bishops are amenable to God alone, how is a league of all the bishops to be secured and maintained? If a member of the episcopal body corporate is found guilty of grave crimes, or refuses to conform to the doctrines or discipline of his colleagues, who is to cut him off? Here Cyprian is not quite clear.

¹ Ep. lxvii. 5.

At one time he seems to think that it is for the entire local church, including the laity, to deal with such cases ;¹ at another time it is an episcopal council ;² again it is the Roman Pontiff.³

Cyprian is certain that the Church is a social unit ; certain, too, that her principle of unity is the united episcopate ; but that the episcopal unity itself demands a principle, he admits in practice, but not always in theory. It would seem as if he never quite realized the precarious character of that episcopal organization to which, at times, he pinned his faith. His ecclesiology, like his theology of the sacraments, left much to be desired.

That he acknowledged the Roman primacy in practice has been shown. The history of the baptismal controversy creates no special difficulty in this connexion. Cyprian's stubborn opposition to the Pope was perfectly compatible with a recognition of the primacy.

To realize this one has only to recall the facts : Theologians had not yet thought out the question as to the value of heretical baptism. Individual bishops had been left quite free to follow either practice in reconciling those who came to them from heretical organizations. Cyprian and his colleagues regarded the baptismal controversy as altogether a question of *discipline*. This is

¹ *cfr.* Ep. lxvii. 3 (*v. supra*).

² *cfr.* Ep. lix. 10.

³ *cfr.* Ep. lxviii. 2, 3.

certain. They professed to allow each bishop to follow the custom which he considered preferable¹; and expressly disclaimed any intention of breaking the peace against those who adopted the Roman practice. In Firmilian's eyes, difference of opinion as to the mode of reconciling heretics, like the difference in custom regarding the time for celebrating Easter,² in no way interfered with the bond of peace. The rule of faith—the κανὼν ἐκκλησιαστικός—was respected by both parties. That the rebaptists of the third century failed so signally to grasp the doctrinal bearing of the controversy, is, of course, remarkable; but facts are facts.

If Stephen's measure was merely disciplinary he could have erred. The rebaptists were convinced that he had erred. The Roman practice they considered theologically indefensible. Hence they believed that by acting upon the papal decree they would deprive converted heretics of the grace of regeneration. Such being their frame of mind, who will deny that, *subjectively* speaking, their resistance to the decree was not only licit, but *obligatory*. They were mistaken, of course; but their error was invincible. *Noluit Cyprianus rationes suas, etsi non veras, quod eum latebat, sed tamen non fictas, veraci quidem sed tamen nondum assertae consuetudini cedere.*³

¹ Ep. lxix. 17; lxxi. 2; lxxii. 3; lxxiii. 26.

² Ep. lxxv. 6.

³ Aug.: *De Bapt.* ii. 18, 13.

CHAPTER VIII

SECTION A.—THE DONATIST SCHISM

History.—The Donatist schism arose as a result of the persecution under Diocletian (303–305). It caused a serious breach in the African Church, just as she emerged from her last great conflict with the Empire.

Diocletian had spared no pains to exterminate the Christian name. The faithful had been outlawed. Those who fell into the hands of the civil authorities were ordered, under the gravest penalties, to offer incense to the idols. Churches had been destroyed and copies of the Scriptures seized and consigned to the flames.

The main body of the Christians had stood firm. Many had even sought the martyr's crown by voluntarily delivering themselves up. These were, however, not always actuated by the loftiest motives. Some were insolvent debtors or notorious criminals, who saw in martyrdom a rather respectable means of escape from a host of creditors or from a life of shame.

Christians, who had delivered up the Sacred Books or vessels, or who had informed on their fellow-Christians, were known as *traditores*. Some

however, like Mensurius, bishop of Carthage, and his deacon, Caecilian, were able to evade the law by secreting the Scriptures, surrendering in their stead some heretical or profane compositions. Others adopted the less prudent, if more heroic, course of roundly refusing to deliver up. Finally, there were those who went about boasting that they had in their possession Sacred Books which they would not relinquish. While the persecution was still raging, Mensurius issued a proclamation forbidding the faithful to honour as martyrs or confessors those who had voluntarily given themselves up, or who had paraded their heroism in refusing to surrender copies of the Scriptures which they possessed.

On the death of Mensurius in 311, Caecilian was elected to succeed, the defeated candidates being the presbyters Botrus and Coelestius. The new prelate was duly consecrated by Felix, bishop of Abtughi; but the validity of the consecration was immediately questioned, on the ground that the consecrating minister was known to have been a *traditor*. Botrus and Coelestius, supported by a rich lady named Lucilla, who had a grudge against Caecilian, communicated with the African bishops, and a largely attended council was convened at Carthage to inquire into the matter.

Secundus, the primate of Numidia, presided. Caecilian would not appear. The assembled bishops, thereupon, declared his consecration

invalid, because performed by a *traditor* ; and a new bishop was straightway elected and consecrated, in the person of Majorinus, a lector of the Church of Carthage and a creature of the vindictive Lucilla (312). Three years later (315), Majorinus died and was succeeded by Donatus the Great, the schismatical bishop of Carthage, from whom the new sect took its name.¹

The breach rapidly extended to the provinces. Christians everywhere became divided ; part declaring for Majorinus or Donatus, and part for Caecilian. Each section had its own hierarchy and ministers ; and separate churches were to be found in almost every district and city. Bishop was set up against bishop and altar against altar.

At one time it seemed as if the accession of Constantine (312) would bring the parties together. In 313 the Donatists petitioned the new Emperor to have the entire case examined and judged by a council of bishops from Gaul.² Constantine refused : the inquiry, he said, must be held at Rome, the personnel of the council to be determined by the Pope. At the same time, in order to reassure the Separatists, he ordered three prominent Gallican prelates to assist at the investigation. The bishop of Carthage was cited

¹ Some think that the Donatists were called after an earlier Donatus, bishop of Casa Nigra, who took part in the pseudo-council of 312.

² St. Optat. : *De Schism. Donat.* i. 22.

to appear, with ten Donatist bishops and ten of those who supported Caecilian.¹

The council, which lasted three days, decided unanimously for Caecilian² and sentence was pronounced accordingly by Pope Melchiades. Separatist bishops who returned to communion were to retain their sees or be provided with others. The terms of settlement were generous.

The Donatists, however, were resolved to hold out. A fresh inquiry was demanded; and Constantine, having regard to their numbers, was persuaded to yield. He accordingly summoned the bishops of his entire dominions to assemble at Arles on the kalends of August 314, to reconsider the case. About fifty sees, including those of London, York, and Lincoln,³ were represented at the council. Pope Sylvester, who had succeeded to Melchiades, was represented by two priests and two deacons.

The council condemned the Separatists, upheld the validity of ordination by a *traditor*, and reprobated the practice of rebaptism. To no purpose, however; the Donatists, setting aside the verdict, appealed from the council to Constantine himself.

The Emperor was puzzled. But, realizing at length that any attempt to heal the schism by a

¹ Eus. *H. E.* x. 5; *cfr. Gest. Coll.* iii. 319.

² St. Opt.: *op. cit.* i. 24; *Gest. Coll.* iii. 320-326.

³ *cfr. Cath. Encycl.*, vol. v, p. 124.

conciliar decision was almost certain to prove abortive, he made up his mind to adjust the entire dispute in person. Accordingly, he had an official inquiry held at Carthage in 315,¹ where it was proved conclusively that the charge of *traditio* which had been made against Felix of Abtughi was utterly without foundation. For the Donatists this was, of course, a fatal blow ; it struck at the very roots of their schism. During the following year (316) Constantine summoned Caecilian and Donatus to appear before him at Milan ; and, having heard both sides with great care, gave his decision in favour of Caecilian.² With a view, however, to uniting the parties more effectually, he detained the rival prelates, and dispatched two Italian bishops, Eunomius and Olympus, to Carthage, with instructions to have a new bishop elected whom both sections would be willing to acknowledge. The Separatists would not agree to this ; and the delegates were forced to return to the Emperor leaving matters as they were.

Constantine now resolved to take strong action. He determined that those who had ignored the decisions of heaven and earth should yield to force. All Donatist conventicles were ordered to be confiscated, and the churches which had been seized by the Separatists were to be immediately

¹ *Cath. Encycl.*, vol. v, p. 124.

² *cfr. Gest. Coll.* iii. 456, 460, 494 ; *Brev. Coll.* iii. 37, 38 ; *Contra Cels.* iii. 82.

restored. His instructions were carried out with the assistance of the military ; and nasty scenes followed, not unfrequently attended with bloodshed. The schismatics, of course, took advantage of the opportunity to proclaim themselves " the Church of the Martyrs " ; and spoke with holy indignation of the " Persecution of Caecilian." Constantine felt that he had blundered.

Finally, in 321, he adopted in despair the policy of toleration. Both parties, he thought, could, by exercising a little forbearance, continue to live in peace side by side. Catholics, accordingly, were, advised to bear with the Donatists.¹ But, once more, the Emperor's plans were frustrated. The schismatics refused to tolerate " the church of the traditors." Deeds of violence were freely resorted to ; Catholic churches were appropriated ; while the clergy, in many cases, were seized and subjected to all manner of indignities.

The Circumcellions.—In this connexion reference should be made to the " Circumcellions," a gang of nomad desperadoes who strove to promote the cause of the Separatists by perpetrating unspeakable outrages on defenceless Catholics. Armed with clubs these *soi-disant* " soldiers of Christ " were to be met with in almost every district in the time of St. Augustine. Numbers of Catholics, lay

¹ *cfr. Gest. Coll.* iii. 549-552 ; *Ep.* cxli. 9 ; *Brev. Coll.* iii. 40-42.

and clerical, were beaten to death and had their property plundered. The bandits themselves, not unfrequently, sought the martyr's crown, by committing suicide, or by having themselves slaughtered wholesale by the pagans. They were religious maniacs.

It was only in 347 that peace was temporarily restored. In that year the Emperor Constans sent two envoys, Paulus and Macarius, with large sums of money for distribution among the Africans, in the hope of inducing the parties to come together. But the envoys were so badly received by the schismatics that Macarius was forced to requisition the assistance of a military escort against attacks from the Circumcellions. A band of these desperadoes encountered his escort at Bagai in Numidia, and a *mêlée* ensued in which a few soldiers and a number of the attacking party were killed. This regrettable incident embittered the Separatists, who believed—though wrongly—that the Emperor's action had been inspired by the followers of Caecilian. In derision they styled the Catholics "Macarians."

A period of "persecution" followed. The envoys commanded the indomitable "servants of God," under the gravest penalties, to return to communion. Many of the Donatist bishops with their followers immediately fled the country. All who remained and who refused to join the Catholics were banished, among them being Donatus himself,

who died in exile about 355. Peace was thus happily restored.

It was, however, a mere breathing-space. With the accession of Julian the Apostate in 361 the struggle was resumed. The exiled Donatists were reprieved, officially reinstated in their basilicas, and granted full liberty of action.¹ The excesses committed by them on their return from banishment baffle description.² Rioting, murder, rape, wanton destruction of churches and church-property, desecration of sacred utensils, assaults on the clergy,—these were some of the means which they employed to avenge themselves upon the “traitors.”

Five years later the tide again turned. The Donatists, having lent their support to Firmus in his revolt against Julian, drew upon themselves the imperial vengeance. Several new edicts were issued against them and old enactments reinforced. Julian's successors kept up the pressure. Gratian, for example, decreed that all Donatist churches were to be transferred to the Catholics.

The Separatists were by this time gradually falling into disrepute. The extravagances of the Circumcellions had brought discredit on them, and many of their bishops had been convicted of serious crimes. Two had been guilty of

¹ St. Opt. : *De Schism. Don.* ii. 16 ; Aug. : *Ep.* xciii. 12 ; cv. 9.

² St. Opt. : *op. cit.* ii. 17, 18.

open immorality, while a third, Silvanus, was proved to have been a traditor under Diocletian. The Separatist prelates who had consecrated Majorinus were also proved to have been traditors.¹ Finally, the rise of numerous divisions among the schismatics themselves heralded the approaching dissolution of the entire organization.

The most notable of these divisions occurred in the "mother-church" itself. Maximianus, a Donatist deacon at Carthage, was excommunicated by his bishop Primianus. The deacon resisted, and had a council of forty-three schismatical prelates summoned to examine his case. Primianus refused to appear, and was deposed by a second council held at Cebarsussum in 393, Maximian being appointed in his stead.² A schism ensued. The Carthaginian Donatists, lay and clerical, became divided, some declaring for the new bishop, the others rallying to Primianus.

Maximian and his supporters were condemned by a council of three hundred and ten Separatist bishops held at Bagai in April of the following year; and those who refused to return to "communion" were treated and persecuted as schismatics.

Donatism received its death-blow in 411, when the utter weakness of the system was publicly

¹ Aug. : *Epp.* xliii. 17 ; liii. 4 ; *De Unit. Eccl.* xlvi ; *Contra Cresc.* iii. 32, 84.

² *Contra litt. Petil.* i. 24.

exposed. In that year the Emperor Honorius, at the request of the Catholic bishops, organized a conference to be held at Carthage under the presidency of his own legate, Marcellinus. Donatists and Catholics were summoned to attend in force, and the parties were given every opportunity for adequate explanation and defence of their respective positions. On the third day the Donatist defence broke down hopelessly, and the *cognitor* gave his formal verdict in favour of the Catholics. The Separatists never recovered from this blow. Their prestige was gone. A remnant continued to hold out until the Saracen invasion of 637, when they finally disappeared.

Doctrinal Position.—The Donatists were never condemned as heretics. They themselves indignantly repudiated the charge of doctrinal illegitimacy, and frequently protested against the injustice of enforcing against them imperial laws which had been enacted to suppress heresy. And yet, as St. Augustine clearly showed, many of their doctrines clashed with the received faith and with the teaching of the Church.

Adopting the principles of St. Cyprian, they held that baptism administered by heretics or schismatics is null and void. They even maintained that the valid administration of any sacrament is conditioned by the probity of the minister. Sinners, they held, have no power to baptize, confirm, ordain, or consecrate. He who is without

grace cannot give grace; *nemo dat quod non habet*.¹

They were at once confronted with a serious difficulty. If the sacraments can be validly administered only by those who are themselves in the state of grace, how can we be satisfied that we have really received the sacrament? One cannot lay bare the conscience of the minister. Inconsistently, the Donatists replied that it is only public or notorious sinners, such as apostates or traditors, who are incapable of validly administering the sacraments: "*Quamvis habeat (minister) conscientiam maculosam, mihi tamen, qui ab eo baptizor, quia latet et nescio, sufficit quod ab eo accipio cuius innocentem quia in ecclesia est conscientiam puto. Nam ideo conscientiam dantis attendo, non ut, quod fieri non potest, de latentibus iudicem, sed ut si quid de illo in publica conscientia est, non ignorem.*"² Those who received baptism, confirmation, or ordination, at the hands of heretics, schismatics, or other public sinners, had these sacraments repeated on their admission to the Donatist communion; while the Eucharist consecrated by a Catholic priest was regarded by them as mere bread and thrown to the dogs.

In practice, however, they frequently ignored

¹ cfr. Opt. : *op. cit.* v. 6, 7 ; Aug. : *Contra litt. Petil.* ii. 6 sqq. ; *Contra Ep. Parm.* ii. 32.

² Aug. : *Contra Cresc.* ii. 21.

their own principles. When a Maximianist bishop returned to the communion of the Primianists, for example, he and his entire flock were admitted to "fellowship" without rebaptism. Then, a number of the Donatist bishops were notorious sinners; many, as we have seen, were convicted of *traditio*. Optatus, bishop of Thamugadi, for many years the official head of the Donatists, was a public sinner and a disgrace to the Christian name. Aided and abetted by Gildo, the Count of Africa, he proved himself a ruthless tyrant and a slave to almost every vice.

Ecclesiology.—The Donatists were professedly puritans. The true Church, they held, is declared in Sacred Scripture to be essentially immaculate. She is Christ's holy and spotless bride: "*Ostendimus ecclesiam Domini in scripturis divinis sanctam et immaculatam fore ubique nuntiatam*"¹ Sinners are outside the Church.

But again the schismatics revealed the weakness of their position by holding that the Bride of Christ is defiled, not by secret sin, but only by crimes which are notorious or manifest. Christians, they asserted, are unchurched only by such sins as public immorality, apostasy, heresy, *traditio*, or schism. Their inconsistency in communicating with notorious criminals, like Optatus of Thamugadi, was, of course, manifest.

¹ *Gest. Coll.* iii. 258.

All who communicated with traditors, schismatics, or other public sinners, were themselves necessarily excommunicate. The entire Christian world, with the exception of a portion of Africa, was, therefore, outside the Church. Practically the whole of Christendom was in communion with the "traditors." Donatism never succeeded in propagating itself. Outside Africa, there was only one Donatist congregation—at Rome, where the Separatists established a succession of anti-popes beginning with Victor.¹ In Spain they set up a bishop, but the people refused to follow him.

The Donatists, we must remember, held strongly that the true Church of Christ is one, holy, catholic, and apostolical. All these notes, they claimed, were found in "the Church of the Martyrs" and in her alone.

To begin with, she was *one*. Donatists constituted a social unit, a single organization rounded off and distinct from pagans and schismatics of every description. Caecilians, Rogatists, Maximianists, and all who held communion with any of these were outside the fold.

Their church was holy. The Donatists professed to be an association of saints. Secret vice, they maintained, was not incompatible with the stainlessness of the Bride of Christ; and they would not allow that any member of their communion was

¹ St. Opt. : *op. cit.* ii. 4.

guilty of public or notorious sin. The church of the "traditors," being an association of public sinners and of excommunicates, was defiled, and hence could not possibly be the true church.

They even claimed *Catholicity*. This was startling, in view of the fact that they were pitted against Christendom. But they explained: The true Church of Christ, they said, is certainly Catholic. The word 'catholic,' however, should not be understood of mere territorial universality. True Catholicity is something higher, and consists in the full possession of the sacraments, in perfection and in stainlessness: "*Catholicum nomen putant ad provincias vel ad gentes referendum, cum hoc est catholicum nomen quod sacramentis plenum est, quod perfectum quod immaculatum non ad gentes.*"¹

Catholicity, we need scarcely add, was the rock on which Donatism perished. Augustine pointed to the isolation of the Separatists as proof conclusive that they did not constitute the church of Christ.

Finally, the Donatists claimed apostolicity. Followers of Christ, they held, were governed from the beginning by a united episcopate; and the continuity of the episcopal succession guaranteed the endurance of the Church. But the Donatist bishops alone, they contended, were the legitimate successors of the apostles; and hence the organiza-

¹ *Gest. Coll.* iii. 102.

tion controlled by them, and it alone, constituted the true fold. By the schism of 312 the remainder of Christendom with its hierarchy had become detached from the legitimate episcopacy, and consequently from the Church of Christ. St. Optatus ridiculed this claim to apostolicity. The Chief See (*cathedra principalis*), he wrote, is filled by Damasus, the legitimate successor to St. Peter. We are in communion with Damasus; therefore our Church is apostolic.¹

There is a Donatist anti-pope, of course, but what is *his* standing? What of the first anti-pope, Victor? Can it be held that *he* was successor to the apostles? No; "*erat filius sine patre, tyro sine principe, discipulus sine magistro, pastor sine grege, episcopus sine populo.*"²

Conclusion.—For students of primitive Catholicity the history of Donatism is eminently instructive. Throughout the protracted struggle all parties were agreed upon this: that the Church Universal is a social unit and necessarily such; she can constitute only *a single society*. She is one, holy, catholic and apostolical. For the Donatists as for Cyprian she is the sole repository of grace and of the means of grace. Outside the Church there is no valid administration of sacraments, no salvation.

Schism was absolutely reprobated by "tradi-

¹ *op. cit.* ii. 3.

² *op. cit.* ii. 4.

tors " and Donatists alike. This is the clearest thing in the history of the conflict. Parmenius, like Augustine, equiparates schism and apostasy. In the eyes of both apologists, to break with the true Church is to perish.

When the schism occurred at Carthage in 312, all Christians, including Majorinus and his followers, recognized that one or other of the opposing parties had put itself outside the pale of salvation. Such, moreover, was the solidarity of the churches, that the breach at Carthage extended automatically to the limits of Christendom; and instead of one organization there appeared two. Christians everywhere felt called upon to make a choice. To communicate with one party was to be excommunicated by the other and *only one* of the rival organizations could be the Bride of Christ.

From the Separatist view-point, of course, practically the whole of Christendom by communicating with Caecilian had broken with the true Church. Hence when the Eastern bishops on the occasion of the council of Sardica (342), endeavoured to induce Donatus to come to terms, he simply refused *so much as to deal with them*, on the ground that they had cut themselves off from the Church of Christ—"the Church of the Martyrs." The visible organic unity and indivisibility of the Church were never more clearly or more consistently proclaimed than by the African Separatists.

SECTION B.—THEOLOGY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Rule of Faith.—The principle of the deposit is upheld by Augustine no less than by his predecessors. For him science is the handmaid of faith: “We understand that we may believe”¹ . . . *Ratio antecedit fidem.*”² Reason and philosophy examine the credentials of revelation,³ and help us to analyse and establish independently much of its content.⁴ Having made good the preambles, however, we receive the Gospel truths, in the first instance, solely on authority.⁵ The apostolic tradition written⁶ and unwritten,⁷ guaranteed, as it is, and interpreted by the Church⁸ is Augustine’s sole rule of faith and of discipline. “For my part,” he writes, “I should not believe the Gospel were I not impelled to do so by the authority of the Catholic Church.”⁹

Ecclesiology.—The Church is the body of Christ. “*Unus ergo homo Christus caput et corpus.*

¹ *Serm.* xliii. 9.

² *Ep.* cxx. 3.

³ *De ver. rel.* 45, 46.

⁴ *cfr. Confess.* vii. 13, 14; *contra Acad.* iii. 43.

⁵ *Ep.* cxlvii. 7.

⁶ *De Doct. chr.* ii. 6; *De consens. Evang.* i. 54; iii. 28 *sqq.*; *De civit. Dei* xi. 3; xviii. 43; *De Gen. ad litt.* vii. 42.

⁷ *De bapt.* v. 31.

⁸ *De Gen. ad litt. lib. imperf.* i; *De bapt.* ii. 5.

⁹ *Contra Ep. fund.* vi.

Quod est corpus Eius ? Ecclesia Eius."¹ The glorified Jesus lives in His Church and works through her. She is His immaculate Spouse,² one, holy, catholic, and apostolical.

Being the body of Christ, the Church is essentially a unit. The faithful form one body, one association held together by the bonds of charity³ and of an external hierarchy. Schism is separative. Mere heresy does not unchurch us *ipso facto*;⁴ nor do Separatists remain within the fold merely by adhering to the true faith.⁵ To break with the Church is to break with all the means of salvation: *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*⁶

As a society the Church is in exclusive possession of the means of sanctification. In this consists her essential holiness. Hence she remains a spotless bride, despite the wickedness of her children. The Church is an assemblage of good men and bad; the body of Christ is a *corpus permixtum*.⁷

Finally, the Church is catholic and apostolical. As has already been shown, Augustine confounded the Donatists by simply pointing to their isolation. The Church of the Scriptures, he argued, is catholic;

¹ *Enarr. in Ps. cxxvii.*

² *ib. lxxxviii.*

³ *Contra Cresc. i. 34 ; contra litt. Petil. ii. 172.*

⁴ *cfr. De Civit. Dei. xviii. 51, 1.*

⁵ *Contra Cresc. i. 34.*

⁶ *De bapt. iv. 24.*

⁷ *De Doct. Chr. iii. 45.*

est toto orbe diffusa.¹ Like Irenaeus, he established the apostolicity of the Catholic hierarchy merely by making good the continuity of the episcopal succession in the Church of Rome.² For Augustine to commune with the See of Peter was to belong to the true Church.³

Theology of the Sacraments.—Sacramental theology owes much to the saintly bishop of Hippo. Before his time, as we have seen, a large section of Christendom held erroneous views as to the value of sacraments administered by heretics. For the rebaptists of the third century sacraments illicitly administered were null. “*Quod (baptisma) nos nec ratum possumus computare quando hoc apud nos constat esse illicitum*.”⁴ The validity of the sacraments they held to be conditioned by the faith of the minister and of the subject; while their successors, the Donatists, went further and maintained that no sacrament can be validly administered by one who is notoriously or publicly unworthy.

On the other hand, those who, with the Roman Pontiff, upheld the validity of heretical baptism, were unable to give a satisfactory reason for the faith that was in them. Stephen, no doubt, had emphasized the efficacy of the sacramental rite itself (*ex opere operato*); but it seemed a mere make-

¹ *Serm.* xlvi. 33.

² *Ep.* lii. 2.

³ *ib.* xliii. 7.

⁴ Cypr. : *Ep.* lxxiii. 1.

shift. How, he was asked, can sin be remitted by those who have not the Holy Spirit? And how can those who are themselves dead quicken others? Further, if the Romans regarded the sacramental rite as efficacious of itself, why did they reconfirm those who were confirmed in heresy?

The air was cleared somewhat by St. Augustine. The fundamental distinction which he drew between validity and liceity in the administration of the sacraments, and the corresponding distinction between their valid and their fruitful reception, marked a new stage in the development of sacramental theology.¹ This, he explained, was the great error of the rebaptists, that they failed to distinguish the *sacrament* from the *sacramental effect*: “*Non distinguebatur sacramentum ab effectu vel usu sacramenti.*”²

His own starting-point was the efficacy of the sacramental rite itself—*ex opere operato*.³ Baptism, wherever or by whomsoever conferred or received, he declared to be valid, provided only it be administered in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.⁴

¹ We gather from certain statements of Pope Stephen and of St. Optatus that the pre-Augustinian Church was vaguely conscious of some such distinction.

² *De bapt.* vi. 1.

³ *ib.* i. 12, 19; v. 21, 29; vi. 2, 4.

⁴ *ib.* vi. 25, 47.

The sacramental rite considered in itself is a holy thing, because instituted by God,¹ Who is present in it,² and Who has sanctified it³ and rendered it efficacious of itself.⁴ Hence it produces its effect independently of the faith⁵ and probity⁶ of either minister or subject. Baptism is validly administered and received by sinners and even by heretics.⁷ “*In ista quaestione non esse cogitandum quis det sed quid det, aut quis accipiat sed quid accipiat, aut quis habeat sed quid habeat.*”⁸

But if the Church be the sole repository of the means of salvation, how, it was asked, can sacraments be validly conferred outside her pale? The sacraments, Augustine replied, when validly administered, imprint on the soul a *character* or spiritual seal which cannot be effaced.⁹ Hence those who are themselves validly baptized or ordained,¹⁰ retain the sacrament even in schism; and, having the spiritual gift, can communicate

¹ *De bapt.* iii. 4, 6; iv. 12, 18; v. 21, 29.

² *ib.* vi. 25, 47.

³ *ib.*

⁴ *ib.* iv. 10.

⁵ *ib.* iii. 14, 19; iv. 15, 22.

⁶ *ib.* iii. 10, 15; iv. 21, 28; v. 3, 3; vi. 1, 2.

⁷ *ib.* i. 1.

⁸ *ib.* iv. 10.

⁹ *Contra Ep. Parm.* ii. 28, 29.

¹⁰ In discussing the validity and the efficacy of the sacraments he concerns himself chiefly with Baptism and Order. But his principles are of general application.

it to others.¹ To show that the doctrine of the character is traditional, he appeals to the practice of the universal Church. Those who were once validly baptized or ordained, he said, and who subsequently separated themselves, were never rebaptized or reordained on their return to communion.²

Does a schismatical minister, then, confer the spiritual gift independently of Christ and of His Spouse the Church? No; the sacraments which he administers are fundamentally not his, but those of the Church.³ Besides, in conferring the sacred gift, he is a mere instrument; Christ is the principal agent. He is the *real donor*, the chief minister. From the view-point of validity, therefore, the spiritual condition of the human agent matters not. It is Christ Himself who baptizes and ordains.⁴

But not every valid administration is lawful or fruitful: "*Dico sacramentum Christi et bonos et malos posse habere, posse dare, posse accipere, et bonos quidem utiliter et salubriter; malos autem perniciose et poenaliter.*"⁵ If the minister be a heretic or a sinner, his administration, *positis ponendis*, is valid, but unlawful. As to the subject, if duly disposed, he receives the sacrament validly

¹ *De bapt.* i. 2.

² *ib.* i. 2.

³ *ib.* i. 10, 14; 15, 23; *Contra litt. Petil.* ii. 69.

⁴ *cfr.* *In Joann.* v. 7; *Ep.* lxxxix. 5.

⁵ *De Bapt.* vi. 2, 4.

and fruitfully ; though it be conferred by the greatest sinner.¹ On the other hand, if not disposed, he receives the sacrament validly, but unfruitfully. In this case the character remains, and bears fruit when the obstacle to its action is removed by penance.

A catechumen may be validly and even fruitfully baptized by heretics, *provided he is careful not to league himself with them, and provided also he has sufficient reason for availing himself of the services of a separatist minister.*² It would seem that in the eyes of Augustine membership in an heretical sect is *in all cases* an obstacle to the infusion of grace. A Christian who has been baptized in schism obtains the 'use' of his baptism³ and the remission of his sins⁴ only on admission to the Church. Grace and regeneration are secured through charity ; and charity is found only in the Catholic communion.⁵

For Augustine, as for the majority of his predecessors, the Church is the exclusive repository of grace and of the means of grace ; *in ea sola baptismus salubriter habetur.*⁶ In schismatical sects the sacraments can be received validly, but never fruitfully. Catechumens who, even in good faith, are baptized in schism receive the character alone ;

¹ *Contra litt. Petil.* i. 3.

² *De bapt.* vi. 2, 4.

³ *ib.* i. 5 ; 8, 11 ; 12, 18 ; 13, 21.

⁴ *ib.* i. 18 ; iii. 13 ; v. 9 ; vi. 5, 7 ; *Contra Ep. Parm.* ii. 28.

⁵ *De bapt.* iii. 16, 21.

⁶ *Contra Cresc.* i. 34.

they are not regenerated.¹ Such seems to have been the view of St. Augustine. In his eyes, grace, the spirit, and remission of sin, could be had only in the unity of the Church.

The principle of the Sacramental character applies to Catholics no less than to Separatists. Members of the true Church who, through lack of the proper dispositions, receive baptism unworthily, obtain the fruit of the sacrament only when the obstacle has been removed²: “[*Remoto obice*] *prodesse incipit quod ante non proderat sed tamen inerat.*”³ *Aliud est non habere, aliud non utiliter habere. Qui non habet est baptizandus ut habeat; qui autem non utiliter habet, ut utiliter habeat corrigendus.*”⁴

¹ *cfr. De bapt.* i. 6.

² *ib.* iii. 3, 4.

³ *ib.* v. 18, 24.

⁴ *ib.* iv. 17, 24; *cfr. Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, vol. ii, p. 225; Tix. : *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 352 *sqq.*

GENERAL SUMMARY

Historical Christianity was a religion of authority because based on a *revelation*. The gospel was not a "wisdom," but a *διδαχή*. *It imposed itself*. It was a preceptive and doctrinal catachesis; it prescribed something to do as well as something to believe. So completely were the early Christians dominated by the principle of the *διδαχή*, that they were regarded by outsiders as an unreasoning *πληθος*. Everything was accepted on authority; philosophizing brethren were suspect.

Christianity was a deposit of divine truths and precepts entrusted by Christ to His apostles, to be preserved intact for the enlightenment and salvation of men. Not all the elements in the new revelation, however, were equally new. The deposit continued to grow until the death of the last apostle, when it ceased to be susceptible of change.¹ Succeeding generations were expected to guard it jealously against "the persuasive words of human wisdom" and the "traditions of men," neither adding to nor taking from it.

The gospel is thus a *received* faith, an inheritance which has come down to us from Christ, through the apostles, and their successors. It is a tradi-

¹ With the rise of the Montanists the Church became explicitly conscious of the term of the New Revelation.

tional norm, a doctrinal and disciplinary κανών. Clement of Rome exhorted the refractory Corinthians to return ἐπὶ τὸν εὐκλεῆ καὶ σεμνὸν τῆς παραδόσεως ἡμῶν κανόνα.¹ To be saved, we must hold fast to the παράδοσις; our beliefs and conduct must be ordered by it. Anything which has not been handed down is *foreign* (ἀλλότριον) and dangerous. Heresy is inventive, original; it is a profane novelty.

Christianity denationalised revelation. The Gospel was announced not to Jews alone, nor to Gentiles alone, but to all men. Christ's appeal was not to a people but to the individual, and therefore to all individuals. The new religion was cosmopolitan and catholic.

Men are saved through Christ *by becoming invisibly united to Him*. All who believe and are baptized become members of a mystical body having Christ as head, and grace—the life of the Spirit—as animating principle. By baptism men, irrespective of race or social standing, are made to live with the life of Christ. They become members of the same Body, branches of the same Vine.

But historical Christianity was something more; it was a *church*. Individualism found no place in the new movement; men were called to the faith singly, but not solitarily. The early missionaries established *societies* wherever they preached,—

¹ *Prima Clem.*, c. vii.

one in each city or district,—so that with the spread of the Gospel the Empire became the home of a new Diaspora. Each church was controlled by a resident hierarchy, selected, as a rule, by the faithful, but invariably ordained by the apostles or their successors. Ecclesiastical superiors received their authority “from above,” and held office for life.

Christianity was not a reformed Judaïsm; the Church was never a Jewish sect. No doubt, it required a supplementary revelation to induce the apostles to admit the uncircumcised to baptism unaccompanied by any observance of the ceremonial law; but history shows that, even antecedently to the conversion of Cornelius and his household, the Church and the synagogue were distinct and independent organizations. Those who would have merged the new ‘tendency’ in Judaïsm separated themselves at an early stage in the Christian development.

Finally, there existed from the very outset a community of communities, a Church of all the churches. The Christian Diaspora was a social unit:

In each church the apostolic tradition, the *ὁρθὸς λόγος*, was secured by the faithful in and through subjection to the local hierarchy. Those who were with the bishop were ‘of God and Jesus Christ.’ Christians, moreover, by conforming to their respective bishops, conformed to one another. The same faith, the same moral code, and the

same cult, obtained everywhere. Orthodoxy was catholic *de iure* and *de facto*.

All this implies organization, a league of churches, a united and, we may add, an *infallible* episcopate. If Christianity was not a philosophy, but a divine διδασχή, unchanging and statutory; and if the bishops, each in his own church, were its sole reliable exponents; then to universalize that διδασχή, without prejudice to its unity and integrity, demanded a federation of bishops which was not only organized, but infallible. Then, as now, individual members of the episcopate were liable to err.

It is not suggested that during the early centuries the Catholic bishops were accustomed to assemble in council, in order to secure an all-round adherence to the apostolic tradition. General councils were not yet called for. The tradition, in its main outlines, was sufficiently clear and well-known, to enable individual bishops in ordinary cases to detect and condemn as erroneous, beliefs and practices which were at variance with the κανόν. In addition, the smaller communities were careful to conform to the central or apostolic churches and these in turn to Rome.¹

¹ Harnack lays great stress on those 'inter-ecclesiastical dispositions,' "which," he says, "secured in important questions the solidarity of the evolution" (*cfr. Mission*, vol. i, pp. 369-380, 445 *sqq.*). He denies, however, that Christianity became an organized whole before the opening years of the third century.

It is manifest, however, that even at this stage an organized episcopate stood in the background ; and hence, when doubts and difficulties arose subsequently, on questions of faith or morals, no *new* authority was created ; the episcopal body corporate, hitherto silent, simply raised its voice and Christendom was called upon to hear the Church. The rise of heresy was the occasion of new definitions ; the contents of the deposit were analysed and legitimately developed and doctrines once defined became irreformable.

The new Diaspora was thus a federation, and not a mere mass of discrete units, each existing and acting independently. Everywhere in the early literature we find the idea of *the Catholic Church*, an organized whole rounded off from and opposed to non-Christians and to dissenters of every description.

This visible organization of Catholicity it was which enabled the Church to rid herself effectively of everything 'foreign.' No student of primitive Catholicity can fail to observe how heresy, at its very rise, found itself automatically thrown off by the Universal Church. If the novelty was clearly at variance with a doctrine already defined, it was at once banned everywhere and its adherents excommunicated. In other cases its rise was the occasion of a definition with the same result : Catholicity was so constructed that everything strange was forced to differentiate itself. Heretics were relegated to the position of dissenters, and

found the doors of the Church of Christ closed against them wherever they travelled. All this witnesses to a federation of churches. Innovators were pitted against a Catholic organization.

The Roman Church was primatial ; she was the " principal church " (*ecclesia principalis*). The See of Peter was the authoritative centre of Christendom.

Peter himself, during his lifetime, was apparently satisfied to act as leader, rather than as primate of the apostolic college. This was to be expected. His fellow apostles, though really subject to him, were individually infallible and even inspired, and their jurisdiction was universal. An exercise of the primacy was thus uncalled for.

But his successors not only claimed a sovereignty, but exercised it from the first. Their extant letters, limited though they are in number, and occasional in character, make it clear that their writers regarded themselves as burdened with the care of all the churches. The primacy was not an usurpation. Innovations were condemned by none more insistently than by the Roman Pontiffs themselves. It is in the text of a Papal decree we find the words : "*nihil innovetur nisi quod traditum est.*"

We grant, of course, that the Ante-Nicene Church did not grasp the principle of the Roman primacy as adequately as does the Catholic Church of the twentieth century. The language of the

early Popes was not always 'primatial,' and their authority was occasionally not only resisted, but openly repudiated. But why should a Protestant controversialist cry victory when he finds a Poly-crates or a Cyprian hurling defiance at the Vicar of Christ, and whole churches appealing from the *cathedra Petri* to a provincial council? If a doctrine in the course of its development—and is there not evidence of development everywhere?—has had to encounter a certain amount of uncertainty and even of positive opposition, is it therefore to be rejected as intrusive? How many truths of faith now universally accepted succeeded in making their way into the Creed unchallenged? How many have been held *semper, ubique et ab omnibus*?

We have noted, in fine, how historical Christianity finds its justification in the personal teaching of Jesus. The apostles in establishing religious societies wherever they preached, did not act on their own initiative. The local church lay within the horizon of the Galilean Prophet. He also arranged that there should be a Church of churches, ruled by the apostles, as a college, and by their successors. Acts xv is the best commentary on Matthew xviii, 18. Lastly, the Roman primacy connects with Jesus through Simon Peter.

Christianity is thus *de facto* and *de iure* a visible organic unit. *As such it is the Body of Christ.* Baptism incorporates us in an Organism which is at once visible and invisible. As invisible, its

animating principle is grace—the life of the Spirit. As visible, it is an external society having as unifying principle the central ecclesiastical government established by Christ. To divide the Church—*whatever be the form of its government*—is to divide the Body of Christ. Schism is never lawful.

CHAPTER IX

THEOLOGICAL

As this chapter professes to be exclusively theological, it opens appropriately, if somewhat dryly, with a definition :

*Schism.*¹—Avanzinus, in his work *De Constitutione Apostolicae Sedis*, defines schism as *rebellion against the authority of legitimate ecclesiastical superiors.*² This would seem to be the received definition. Assuming, as we do here, that the church is a society ruled by a divinely constituted hierarchy, in subjection to the Roman Pontiff, schism is adequately defined as *a refusal to acknowledge the authority of the Pope.* It is rebellion in the church.³

The author of the *Summa* states that the sin

¹ Gr. σχίσμα (fr. σχίζω) : lit. a *fissure* or *rent* (Mt. ix. 16 ; Mk. ii. 21). In an applied sense it signifies a division or dissension, more or less serious, in a visible society (Jo. vii. 43 ; ix. 16 ; x. 1 Cor. i. 10 ; xi. 18 ; xii. 25).

² *Op cit.*, p. 19.

³ The term 'rebellion' as we use it is synonymous with *armed secession* and connotes repudiation of the flag.

It is unnecessary to discuss local or diocesan schism, which consists in a refusal to recognize the authority of one's bishop. Local schism is not at all incompatible with a recognition of the papal authority (*cfr.* Murray : *op cit.*, *Disp.* vi, sect. i. 25).

of schism is directly and *per se* opposed to ecclesiastical unity.¹ To understand his meaning we may recall what has been laid down in our introduction, to the effect that, properly speaking, an external society is divided only by rebellion. Hence he speaks of schism as *a refusal to subject oneself to the Pope*.² Suarez states that the word schism properly signifies the sin of those who endeavour to *divide the Church*. "Members of the Church can *cut themselves off from her*, and this is what we understand by schism."³ The concept is traditional. We already know that in the eyes of the early Fathers the Church of Christ is a social unit, an organism, which is *dismembered* by schism.

Schism is, therefore, disobedience and something more. "Disobedience *with rebellion* constitutes schism."⁴ Avanzinus is more explicit: "Praelatum criterium ad cognoscendum formale schisma est videre utrum qui schismatici dicuntur re et effectu studeant *excute iugum supremi regiminis Romani Pontificis*. Namque hoc gravissimum crimen facile *confundi* potest cum simplici *inobedientia quae non est schisma* nisi supremum

¹ *Summa* : 2-2, Q. 39. 1.

² *Ib.* A schismatic is defined by Father Lehmkuhl as one who refuses to be subject to the Roman Pontiff (*op cit.*, vol. i. 380), and by Murray as one who rebels against the Pope (*op cit. Disp.* vi. sect. i. 21).

³ Tr. iii, *Disp.* xii, sect. 1.

⁴ *Summa* : loc. cit.

gradum obtinuerit quo re et effectu *abscissio, subtractio, recessio* sequatur.”¹ Murray, too, is careful to emphasize the distinction: “Si aliquis legem aut praeceptum particulare Pontificis violet, non ideo schismaticus est. Ita enim agere potest *non ex mente rebelli contra auctoritatem Pontificis.*”²

THE GREAT WESTERN SCHISM

If schism is rebellion, and if anything less is not schism at all, the history of the so-called Great Western Schism may be studied with equanimity by Catholic apologists. The episode affords no basis for the Anglican contention that the Roman Church, by canonizing members of each party to the dispute, implicitly approved of the “breach-within-the-Church” theory.

For let us review the facts:—On the death of Gregory IX, the last of the Avignon popes, Bartholomew Prignano, Archbishop of Bari, was elected and proclaimed pope, under the title of Urban VI (April 9, 1378). For four months he was acknowledged by Christians everywhere. Then the majority of the Cardinals questioned the validity of his election, called upon the faithful to repudiate him, and later elected a new pope, in the person of Robert of Geneva, who took the name of

¹ *Op. cit.*, *loc cit.*

² *Op. cit.*, *Disp.* vi, sect. i. 22; *cfr.* Rhodes: *op cit.*, vol. ii. pp. 1-4.

Clement VII. The "schism" was now consummated ; the popes excommunicated each other and Christendom took sides.

Anglican controversialists refer triumphantly to the period of the anti-popes as proving that, on our own showing, there can be schism within the Church. But they misunderstand. If we assume that one of the rival pontiffs was really Pope—and we regard Urban's claims as practically established—then the anti-pope and his following were really, though in good faith, pitted against their lawful sovereign. But were they in *schism*? We scarcely think so. Schism is rebellion ; and the followers of the anti-pope were anything but rebels. What they refused to acknowledge was not the papal authority, but rather the claims of a certain individual to that authority. Hence the term schism as applied to the dispute in question is really a misnomer.¹ The Great Western Schism was something like the Wars of the Roses rather than a War of Independence.

The same must be said if we suppose, with some, that a doubtful pope is no pope, and that accordingly there was really no pope while the schism (so-called) endured. On this hypothesis it was

¹ The fact that the division has always been termed a schism does not startle us ; there is little in a name. Each obedience naturally denounced the other as schismatical—it is the fashion in such cases—and posterity has retained the opprobrious epithet.

again, as in the Wars of the Roses, a struggle, not to set up a new flag, but rather to determine who had a right to the old.¹

DR. GORE ON SCHISM

Dr. Gore devotes a whole chapter of his work on "Roman Catholic Claims" to a discussion of the *nature of schism*. "It is so fully our duty," he writes, "to preserve the unity of Love or outward fellowship, 'the bond of peace,' that wilful schism would annul all the moral fruits which follow from being constitutionally within the ecclesiastical unity. That is to say, schism does not merely mean breaking away from the episcopal *form* of government. The schisms of the early Church were episcopal in form."²

What then constitutes the guilt of schism? "Not merely being separated," he replies, "for the separated party may not be the guilty party, as, for example, in the case when Diotrephes 'excommunicated' the brethren who came from St. John, or Pope Victor the Asiatic Churches, or Pope Stephen, St. Cyprian and the African Churches."³ All this is tantamount to saying that

¹ How different the case of the Reformers! With them it was no mere question of disputing an individual's claim to the existing authority; it was rather a question of repudiating the authority itself.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

³ *Ib.*

schism is not excommunication. For Catholics this requires no elaboration. Schism is a sin, excommunication a punishment.¹

Having explained what does not constitute schism, Dr. Gore proceeds to set forth what does. "Schism," he states, . . . "means wilful self-withdrawal from the legitimate succession of the Catholic Church ; . . . or in a secondary sense the wilful causing of a breach inside the Church."² 'Primary' schism is separative and always sinful ; 'secondary' schism is not separative and is allowable in exceptional circumstances. Hence we must distinguish between breaches *in* the Church which are sometimes lawful and separations *from* the Church which are absolutely inexcusable.

The Greek and the Anglican schisms, he goes on to explain, are justifiable breaches *within* the Church. Despite them, Catholicity is visibly one. The Greek, the Anglican, and the Roman communions, are branches of one and the same tree—the Church Universal.

Does the history of primitive Christianity afford any basis for the "breach-within-the-Church" theory ? Yes, he answers, the Meletian schism at Antioch in the fourth century was recognized at the time, even by Rome, as a breach within the Church. Two bishops, Miletius and Paulinus,

¹ The exact nature of excommunication will be explained presently.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 126.

ruled the same church ; each excommunicated the other ; Paulinus was recognized by Rome, Meletius by Asia and yet East and West remained in full communion with each other. In Dr. Gore's eyes we have here a recognized case of a breach within the Church. The separation of England from Rome he considers to be similar in character.¹

But the analogy breaks down *on the essential point*. Despite the schism at Antioch the Catholic Church in the fourth century was a visible organic unit ruled by the Roman Pontiff or, if this be denied, by a united episcopate. There was *one flag* at all events—one visible central authority to which Christians everywhere subjected themselves. When the schism occurred at Antioch the parties though excommunicating each other recognized a common flag. The Roman and the Anglican communions on the other hand do not acknowledge a common flag. Hence they form distinct and separate organizations. One flag one society ; *n* flags *n* societies and therefore *n* churches.

EXCOMMUNICATION ²

Father Lehmkuhl defines excommunication as "exclusion from the benefits of Church membership."³ It is the severest punishment inflicted by

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 129 *sqq.*

² Lat. *excommunicatio* : *ex*, out of ; *communicatio*, communion.

³ *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 632.

the Church. By it the Christian, lay or cleric, is deprived of all his rights and privileges as a member of the ecclesiastical society. *Excommunication is outlawry in the Church.*¹

Hence schism and excommunication differ *toto coelo*. The former is a sinful act or state ; the latter a punishment of its nature medicinal and salutary. Not every excommunicate is schismatical ; outlaws are not necessarily rebels.

DOGMAS

The word dogma (Gr. δόγμα fr. δοκέω) literally signifies not only an *opinion*, but a *decree* (Lat. *sententia, placitum, decretum*).² In the New Testament it is also used (in the plural) of the precepts of the Mosaic Law ;³ and St. Ignatius speaks of

¹ In the early Church, so far as we can gather, there were two kinds of excommunication, one local the other inter-ecclesiastical. The former deprived individual Christians, totally or in part, of the benefits of Church membership, and corresponded closely with our modern censure. The latter was a breach of communion between churches implying little more than a refusal on the part of one bishop to communicate *in sacris* with another. In this sense bishops frequently excommunicated each other in primitive times ; and excommunication was the regular penalty incurred by a bishop who absented himself without sufficient reason from a provincial council.

² Lk. ii. 1 ; Ac. xvi. 4 ; xvii. 7 ; also read (loc. διάταγμα) in Heb. xi. 23 by Lachmann ; *cfr.* Col. ii. 14, 20 ; Esth. iii. 9 ; Dan. ii. 13 ; vi. 8.

³ Eph. ii. 15.

τὰ δόγματα τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων.¹ Lastly, we find the word used by profane authors to denote a philosopher's *tenets*,² acceptance of which is a condition of membership of his school.³

In Catholic usage a dogma is simply a defined truth; a truth, that is, acceptance of which is required under penalty of excommunication. We find dogmas in every school and society on the face of the earth. No one, we presume, is admitted to membership in the Eighty Club who does not accept the policy of Free Trade. It is a Liberal dogma. Protestants who denounce Catholics as dogmatists make themselves ridiculous. Is there a Protestant Church in Christendom without its dogmas?

HERESY ⁴

Etymologically, the Greek word *αἵρεσις* connotes a *taking* (fr. *αἰρέω*) or *choosing* (fr. *αἰρέομαι*),⁵ as well as the thing chosen; and hence an *opinion* or *view*. In the New Testament it has three distinct uses: It is employed six times in the Acts, to denote a separatist organization as such,

¹ *Ep. ad Magn.* xiii. 1.

² Lat. *decreta, dogmata*.

³ Cic. *Acad.* iv. 9; Just. M. *Ap.* i. 26; *cfr.* Grimm: *op cit.*, p. 106; *Dict de Théol. Cath.* F. xxx., pp. 1574 *sqq.*

⁴ "Quid ergo faciat haereticum, regulari quadam definitione, comprehendi, sicut ego existimo, aut non potest aut difficillime potest" (Aug. *Praef. ad lib. de haer.*).

⁵ *cfr.* Lev. xxii. 18; 1 Macc. viii. 30 [LXX].

Christian or otherwise.¹ St. Paul uses it on two occasions in reference to *dissensions* arising out of diversity of opinion ;² and St. Peter employs it once to designate a doctrine at variance with the received teaching.³

In theology, heresy is the rejection of a dogma.⁴ Let us be clear about this. Every society has its dogmas or definitions. Members who reject one of these become guilty of heresy of a kind. A member of the Eighty Club, for example, who abandons the principles of Free Trade for those of Tariff Reform, is regarded by his fellow-members as a heretic in politics. So in the Church ; rejection of an ecclesiastical dogma, and that alone constitutes heresy.⁵

¹ Ac. v. 17 ; xv. 5 ; xxiv. 5, 14 ; xxvi. 5 ; xxviii. 22 (*cfr.* Joseph, *Bel. Jud.* ii. 8. 1 ; Just. M., *Dial.* xviii. 108).

² Gal. v. 20 ; 1 Cor. xi. 19.

³ 2 Pet. ii. 1 ; *cfr.* Grimm, *lib. cit.*, p. 11.

⁴ "Haeresis est infidelitatis species pertinens ad eos qui fidem Christi profitentur sed eius dogmata corrumpunt" (St. Thos. : *Summa* 2-2, Q. xi. a. 1).

⁵ Heresy involves *disobedience* (*cfr.* Tit. i. 10 ; Rom. vi. 17 ; 2 Cor. x. 6-7). St. Thomas goes farther and holds that every heretic is also a schismatic ; (*Summ.* 2-2, Q. xxxix. a. 1) and in this he is followed by many modern theologians including Murray (*De Eccl.*, vol. i., p. 377). But we doubt if the doctrine is quite scientific. It is true of course that heretics, as a rule, are also schismatics ; also that anyone who perseveres in heresy is presumed to be in schism ; but we do not think that heresy, at least in its early stages, is necessarily separative. A Christian may disobey the Holy See even to the extent of rejecting a dogma, and yet not set up a new flag.

Infallibility.—Christ, it has been shown, established a world-organization. His kingdom is essentially *one* and *catholic*; and will endure as such to the end. Schism is utterly sinful.

We have noted, too, how the Church, from her earliest infancy, was conscious of the irreformability of her own definitive utterances. The deposit was one and unchanging; so were all doctrines proposed absolutely by the Church as portion of the deposit. *Christian dogmas were not subject to revision.*

The supreme ecclesiastical *magisterium* was, therefore, regarded — implicitly at least — as endowed with the prerogative of infallibility. It follows at once from the foregoing. For consider the condition of things which must obtain if the Church be fallible even in definitive utterances. A certain dogma of hers, let us suppose, is not only questionable but *actually false*; and, once false, whatever Modernists may say, it can never become true. And yet it is irreformable. The Church must continue to impose it to the crack of doom, under penalty of excommunication. What course, then, is open to those Christians who cannot help regarding it an error? They cannot conform. To subscribe to false teaching, by whomsoever proposed, is intrinsically wrong. Neither can they set up a new flag. Schism is never lawful. Those sincere and enlightened Christians, therefore—they and their successors,—are obliged to *live their lives as outlaws devoid of all hope of restoration.* It is the

reductio ad absurdum of the doctrine of fallibility. Either the Church is infallible in irreformables or schism is sometimes lawful. There is no *via media*.

ANGLICAN PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH UNITY

"We maintain," writes Dr. Gore, "that primarily the unity of the Church is a unity of inward life."¹ The Church Militant and Triumphant is one, he holds, because the sap of Christ's life is derived into her from one and the same source. But there is also an external ministry, subordinate to and subserving the life of the Spirit; a visible apostolic organization through which alone God has covenanted to give us grace. "Each local church exists . . . to keep the streams of the water of life flowing. . . . Each has a necessary connection with all the others in the witness of truth and in the fellowship of love . . . but their primary point of union is nothing lower than Christ."²

In Dr. Gore's eyes the Church is an external organic unit *de iure*,³ but not *de facto*. "Divisions in the Church," he writes, "prevent her from bearing the witness she ought to bear to the one

¹ *op cit.*, p. 30.

² *ib.*, pp. 33-34.

³ "It is incumbent on us to avoid schism in the body." The unity of the Spirit "ought to result in" outward fellowship (p. 28).

life by which she lives ; but," he adds, " she no more ceases to be one by outward divisions than she ceases to be holy by tolerating (*sic*) sin." ¹ Schisms, we are told, do not affect the primary unity, " which consists in the derivation of the life of the Spirit from Christ down the channels of His organized society." ² Dr. Gore charges us with holding the " thoroughly unscriptural " position that the unity of the Church is primarily a unity of visible association. ³

But the learned prelate's grasp of Catholic principles is strangely inadequate. As I understand our system, we hold for a body of Christ which is a visible society animated by the Holy Spirit. *Under the latter aspect* its organizing principle is grace—the life of the Spirit—derived from an unseen Head and quickening the members ; *as visible* it is an external society which *like all societies* has as its primary unifying principle a visible government. ⁴

As a society the Church of the New Testament and of the early Fathers is the body of Christ and therefore essentially one ; but we are positively at

¹ *ib.*, p. 29.

² *op. cit.*, p. 36.

³ *ib.*, p. 35.

⁴ Dom Chapman, replying to Dr. Gore, denies that Catholic theologians make *hierarchical* unity the *primary* unity. " Theologians," he writes, demand for the Church a three-fold visible unity " : the first, *primary and fundamental, unity of faith* (the symbolical bond), the second unity of intercom-

a loss to understand how Dr. Gore can seriously hold that a church which separates itself and that from which it separates can together form a single society. Can we say that the separated colonies and the British Empire together form one State? Is it not recognized that oneness of flag is essential to social unity?

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

That portion of the treatise "De Ecclesia" which professes to determine the extension of the Church, has still to be treated scientifically. The question as to who are and who are not members of the body of Christ looks simple; but one searches the handbooks in vain for a clear or satisfactory reply.

Father Tanquery, for example, discusses the entire question of Church membership in the language of perplexity and indecision. His attitude throughout is ingeniously non-committal. The body of the Church he boldly defines as "the aggregate of those who are externally united into a

munion (the liturgical bond), the third and last unity of government (the hierarchical bond).

No doubt it works out that way; but is it not at once clearer and simpler to hold for one ultimate unifying principle and one only—that of Government. The other two bonds appear to owe their efficiency as principles of external unity entirely to the authority which imposes them. In any visible society, ecclesiastical or otherwise, there seems to be one primary principle of unity and only one—the flag.

single Christian association, in subjection to the bishops and to the Roman Pontiff.”¹ This definition one would think is sufficiently clear to do away with all obscurity; and yet in a later section² he tells us that *all baptized persons* belong to the body of the Church in some way (*aliquo modo*); catechumens incipiently (*inchoative*); adult public heretics and occult and notorious schismatics imperfectly (*imperfecte*); tolerated excommunicates truly (*vere*), and vitandi not completely (*non-complete*)! We find this difficult to understand.

In the hope of imparting to the reader a few clear ideas on an admittedly obscure subject we shall discuss the question under three distinct headings as follows:—

- (a) The Vine (*i.e.*, the mystical body as energized by grace).
- (b) The “soul” of the Church.
- (c) The social body (*i.e.*, the mystical body as an external society ruled by a visible hierarchy under the Pope).³

¹ Corpus est . . . collectio eorum qui exterius in unam societatem Christianam coadunantur sub regimine episcoporum Romanique Pontificis (*op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 533).

² pp. 583–590.

³ The reader will be careful to note that what we have named the Vine and the social body respectively are one and the same thing viewed under different aspects. The basis of the distinction is found in the *Summa*, p. iii, q. viii, art. 6 (*resp.*).

THE VINE

Baptism unites us interiorly to Christ. It is a laver of regeneration,—a new birth by which we become introduced into the life of the Spirit. It makes us live with Christ's own life ; it connects us with Him as with the Fountain of Grace. For St. Paul baptism incorporates us really if mystically into the crucified Redeemer. In Him and through Him as Head we form an organism energized by His life. This mystical organism is the Vine of John XV.

Coming to discuss the question as to who are branches, the case of departed souls creates no difficulty. It is not disputed that the reprobate are cut off for ever from the Mystical body as it is not disputed that souls which depart this life in the state of grace are confirmed in membership. “ The Anglican conception of Church unity,” writes Dr. Gore, “ does not confine it to this world but includes within it the departed who are like us in Christ.” ¹ This is the Catholic conception as well provided there be question of the Vine and not of the social body.

As regards this life, it is held by many Catholic theologians and exegetes that membership in the Vine is forfeited by heresy. This view, though strongly supported, strikes us as being somewhat

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 32.

extreme. As we understand Catholic principles, a baptized person ceases to be a branch of the Vine only by death in mortal sin.

This seems to be implied in our theology of the sacraments. So long as life lasts any one who is baptized, even though a formal heretic or in schism, is habitually capable of receiving at least some sacraments, not only validly but fruitfully. This shows, we imagine, that *he is not yet quite separate*. If he were, the sacramental ducts which have been set up by baptism and which connect his soul with the Fountain of grace, would be severed, and he would require to be rebaptized to draw upon the source again, through the sacraments.

We recognize, of course, that heretics and others who incur excommunication, are placed in a state of grave spiritual necessity. But the censure does not lop them off from the Vine-stock. It leaves the channels of grace intact, and merely holds up the stream of life. And so excommunicates, by mere removal of the censure, become at once capable of receiving the sacraments validly and fruitfully. A second baptism is not required to re-establish sacramental connection with the Head. Baptism has made us branches of the Vine and branches we remain until death, sins and censures notwithstanding.

Each branch is quickened to some extent. In the souls of the just the stream of life is full and continuous; in the case of sinners it is weak and

intermittent—more especially if the sinner be a formal heretic. But so long as soul and body remain united, every baptized person is animated to some extent by the life of the Spirit. A Christian is never quite dead—until he dies.

We have tried in vain to make out Dr. Gore's views on the question of membership in the Vine. He quotes Dr. Pusey to the effect that Christians who reject the faith, the sacraments, or the apostolic succession of the bishops, "sever themselves not only from the body of Christ, but directly from the Head loosing the band which binds them unto Him" ¹ This is a sweeping assertion; but Dr. Gore is not quite prepared to stand by it personally: "Every one," he writes, "who has a certain inward gift is in the Church unity; but none can, I do not say possess but make good their claim to possess that gift in its fulness ² save those who dwell within the unity of the apostolic organization which is the visible Church. It is only through this visible organization that God has covenanted to give us the invisible Life" ³

What are we to understand by 'subordinate' membership in the Church? And if God has covenanted to give us invisible Life only through the apostolic organization, how is Dr. Gore in a position to assure Dissenters that they have got the inward gift even in small measure?

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 31.

² "All baptized persons," he adds, "are in a subordinate sense inside the Church."

³ *ib.*

THE SOUL OF THE CHURCH:

By the soul of the Church I should like to understand the manifold grace of God which permeates and quickens the Body of Christ in all its members. As actually employed by theologians, however, the expression is simply synonymous with "sanctifying" grace.¹

This peculiar distinction between the body and the soul of the Church is another outcome of doctrinal development. That portion of our theology which treats of the economy of grace has undergone an extraordinary transformation since the Patristic period. We already know that the early fathers almost without exception depict the Church as a sealed fountain (*fons signatus*), whence alone men can draw the vivifying waters; an ark of Noë outside which no one can be saved. The axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* they interpreted rigorously, looking on non-Christians of every description, as well as heretics and schismatics, as spiritually lost.

With the lapse of centuries theologians came to realize that the traditional view in this matter was somewhat extreme. They recognized the fact that

¹ i.e., with the supernatural habits of which charity is the culmination and "form." The appropriation of the epithet "sanctifying" to *habitual* grace must be puzzling to the uninitiated. Is not *all* grace—*gratum faciens*—sanctifying?

many remained outside the Church in good faith, and that of these some really lived well according to their lights. Accordingly the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* came to be so interpreted as to allow for the possibility of salvation in certain cases outside the Body.¹ The distinction between the body and the soul of the Church was found convenient as enabling theologians to retain a time-honoured axiom while holding more liberal views on the economy of grace. Heretics and unbaptized persons who are saved, they held, are, in a sense, inside the Church, *since they belong to her soul*.

It is somewhat confusing. The theology of the early fathers is intelligible and their terminology quite suitable. For them Christianity was a body animated by the life of the spirit as by a soul. The analogy was perfect. The soul animated the body in all its members,² and only the body. Modern theologians, on the contrary, speaking of the Church, set up a relation between body and soul which is without parallel in our experience of things. They speak of a soul which informs some members of the body, but not others ; while—strangest of all—it energizes “ members ” which

¹ Unbaptized persons who acquire justification belong to the body, not actually, but only *in voto*.

² Even members who had lost the habit of charity were still animated to some extent by the life of the Spirit (*cfr. Adv. Haer. iii. 24. 1*).

do not belong to the body. Be it remembered that there is no question of doctrine here. Our complaint is entirely about words: that to interpret the patristic formula: "outside the Church no salvation" so as to include in "the Church" some who are not baptized, is to "read into" the axiom a meaning which it cannot bear. Theologians occasionally put new wine into old bottles.

As the use of the expression "the soul of the Church" as a synonym for habitual grace has become so general, we accept it—under protest; and merely warn the lay reader to be on his guard against misunderstanding it. The "Soul of the Church" of Catholic theology is not any invisible assemblage of just men unbaptized as well as baptized. It is simply *grace*; and hence it would be less misleading if we spoke of *participation* rather than of *membership* in the soul of the Church. The Soul of the Church is a *thing* and not a collection of persons.¹

THE SOCIAL BODY

Having discussed the Vine, with its mystic energizing principle, we come to examine something

¹ Father Tanquary writes as follows of the distinction between the body and the soul of the Church:—"The body is the visible element, the aggregate of those who are externally united . . . in subjection . . . to the Roman Pontiff. The soul, on the other hand, is the invisible element or the collection of those who are . . . in the state of grace." This language is calculated to mislead.

more tangible—viz., *the external society* which we call *the Church*. Who are its members? How is membership forfeited? Are Christians unchurched by evil-doing, by excommunication, by heresy, by schism? These are straight questions demanding a straight answer.

Sin.—Mere sin is not separative. This was recognized from the very outset. Baptized persons, however wicked, remained within the fold, and continued to enjoy the fellowship of the “saints.” Cockle and wheat were suffered to grow together until the harvest. It was only at death that sinners became unchurched.

Excommunication.—Mere excommunicates are also within the Church. This, too, was understood from the beginning. Although the lapsed, and public sinners generally, were deprived of the sacraments and of other benefits of Church-membership, they remained fully subject to the hierarchy.¹ A course of penitential exercises was

¹ The excommunicated Corinthian although “delivered over to Satan” was understood to remain subject to St. Paul and to the local hierarchy (cfr. *Prat. : op. cit.*, vol. i. 141–142).

The form of words employed in absolving from excommunication is set down in the Roman ritual as follows:—

Auctoritate Apostolica, qua fungor in hac parte, absolvo te a vinculo excommunicationis quam incurristi, et restituo te sacrosanctis ecclesiae Sacramentis, communioni et unitati fidelium. In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.

Excommunicates are, therefore, not quite unchurched. They remain *within the pale*, but *in bonds*.

prescribed for the outlawed brethren ; and those who did what was required of them were authoritatively restored to communion, if the existing discipline permitted. Subjection to the established authority in any society we already know to be a formal test of membership.

Here again Father Tanquery's position is not consistent. Christians, he asserts, are not members of the Church so long as they are excommunicate ;¹ and yet a little farther on² we find it stated that *tolerati* are not wholly (*non totaliter*) unchurched. He even adopts the common opinion that *tolerati* are really members of the Church.

Father Wernz defines excommunication as a censure whereby one is separated from the communion of the faithful.³ This definition is correct ; but we find in a later section⁴ a misleading comparison between *excommunication* and schism. Both, he tells us, are *separative*, and differ only in this that one is compulsory, the other voluntary.⁵ Bargilliat, too, asserts that excommunicates are lopped off from the Church as decayed members.⁶

¹ *vol. cit.*, p. 586.

² *ib.*, p. 589.

³ *Jus Decretalium* : xvi. 180.

⁴ *ib.* 354.

⁵ " Si quis ob grave delictum invitus . . . separatur erit excommunicatus sed non schismaticus ; is enim sponte non recedit " (*ib.*).

⁶ " Tamquam putridum membrum ab ecclesia abscinditur " (*Tract. xi, c. 3, a. 1*).

Suarez is much more satisfactory. Excommunicates, he writes, are deprived merely of communion and not of membership ; just as a hand or foot may be deprived of nourishment and of ' influx ' from the rest of the body, and yet remain a member.¹ This he declares to be the traditional view : " The Fathers never teach that excommunicates are outside the Church, but merely cut off from communion." ² And he quotes St. Augustine ³ to the effect that " those who are punished by degradation or excommunication are not separated from the people of God." Finally he implies that excommunication is nothing more than outlawry *within* the Church : " Potest autem fieri ut civis permaneat quispiam alicuius reipublicæ et tamen arceatur a consortio et familiaritate concivium." ⁴

Heresy.—As to heretics, we seem placed in a dilemma : hold what we will, we have tradition against us. The Fathers can be quoted *ad nauseam* in support of the view that heretics are without the pale. On the other hand tradition has it that all baptized persons remain bound by the laws of the Church till death. There is a contradiction here. If heretics are under the flag, they are within the pale ; if they are one hair's breadth outside the pale,

¹ *De Fide* : D. ix, sect. 1, n. 14.

² *ib.* n. 16.

³ *Contra Don*, c. xx.

⁴ *loc. cit.* n 5.

the arm of ecclesiastical authority cannot reach them.

Of two contradictory traditions we follow what is the more fundamental ; and in this case it would seem as if the more liberal tradition must hold the field. To begin with, we have noted how St. Paul and the early Fathers recognized that a formal heretic does not at once forfeit membership in the Church, *nor even the privileges of membership*. Heretics were retained in communion until they had ignored two warnings. Further, we feel certain that statements of early writers,¹ to the effect that heretics are outside the Church, should not and cannot be interpreted as implying that heresy really exempts the Christian from obedience to ecclesiastical authority. Heretics were said to be unchurched simply because, *as excommunicates*, they were *outlawed* ; and because, *as formal heretics*, they participated in the life of the Spirit to a less extent than did ordinary excommunicates. Tradition, it would seem, implicitly recognizes that heretics remain members of the visible Church so long as life lasts.

Suarez holds the opposite view ; but his defence is weak. " All who have the faith," he writes, " are members of the Church ; all who have not the faith are outside." ² Hence pure schismatics are

¹ And the same is true of official pronouncements of the Church in reference to heretics.

² Tract. i, D. 1, sect. 1.

members, and so are catechumens. To the objection that, by regarding the latter as members of the Church, he implicitly looks upon them as subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he replies that "catechumens are not subject to the authority of the Church, because they have not the baptismal character. Baptism is the door by which we enter the visible Church." Here the great theologian, as it were, unconsciously hits upon the true principle of Church membership. Baptism alone it is which incorporates us into the social Body;¹ and all validly baptized persons are members of the Church, and therefore subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction.² Suarez admits that heretics are subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction; but this is true, he holds, "not because they are members of the Church, but simply because they have inflicted an injury upon her"!

Schismatics.—We come, in fine, to the case of schismatics; and ask if even they can be said to belong to the visible Church. At this stage we are concerned entirely with schismatics as such. In so far as these may be also heretics or excommunicates their standing has been already determined.

¹ No one is born a member of the Church.

² "Haeretici, schismatici, denique omnes baptizati per se legibus ecclesiasticis subjacent" (Lehm., *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 140).

THE CONGRESS OF VELEHRAD

In July 1907 a large and representative congress of theologians, secular and regular, was convened at Velehrad in Moravia with a view to bringing about a better understanding between East and West. There were present in all seventy-six members, including the Prince Archbishop of Olmütz, the Vicar Apostolic of Bulgaria, the Archbishop of Leopoldis, and the Bishop of Kamenetz. Andrew, Archbishop of Galicia, presided.

The proceedings opened with a paper by Rev. John Urban of Cracow, entitled: "De eis quæ a theologis Occidentalibus pro Orientalibus effici possint et debeant." The paper, which was warmly applauded, has been published in the official Acts of the Congress.¹

M. Urban gives it as his considered judgment that some modification of current western phraseology in reference to church membership is imperative. Most handbooks of ecclesiology, he says, refuse to allow that heretics and schismatics belong to the visible Church. It is recognized, of course, that separatists who are in good faith and in the state of grace belong to the soul of the Church ;

¹ *Acta Primi Conventus Velehradensis*. Pragae Bohemorum 1908. Typis Aep. Officinae Typographicae in commissione Bibliopolae Rohlíček & Sievers. Pragae 190-1.

but then may not the same be said of non-Christians? This implicit lowering of schismatics to the level of the unbaptized heathen, he declares, is not only harsh, but unwarrantable; and western theologians are called upon to draw up a more conciliatory formula to define the extension of the Church. A formula of this kind, he holds, is not only permissible but really demanded by a close analysis of theological principles.

Theologians of the post-Reformation period, he proceeds, are not sufficiently careful to distinguish between the Church as a visible society and the same as the mystical Body. As to the Church social, Suarez, he notes, puts forward internal faith as its ultimate constitutive principle,¹ finding room within her pale for pure schismatics and even for catechumens; while Bellarmine and theologians generally put forward subjection to the Roman See as the real test of membership, and unchurch, not alone those who belong to heretical sects, but even pure schismatics.

Cardinal Franzelin tries to hold a middle course between the position of Suarez and that of Bellarmine. All who are validly baptized, he states, are incorporated into the visible body, and forfeit membership only by a formal mortal sin of heresy or of schism. Hence public heretics or schismatics,

¹ . . . forma qua corpus ecclesiae in suo esse constituitur. (*Acta*, p. 22.)

though unchurched *in foro externo*, continue to be members of the visible Body in the eyes of God, so long as their adherence to a separatist organization is not subjectively and gravely culpable. This view the lecturer rejects as implying that a purely internal sin of heresy is capable of cutting one off from the visible Body.

Proceeding to set forth his own opinion, M. Urban, following the Jesuit theologians Lingens and Piatkiewicz, lays it down that the baptismal character is the first and fundamental principle in virtue of which the Church has and retains her essential constitution. It follows, therefore,—the character being indelible—that no validly baptized person can, while life lasts, be placed outside her pale. Acts and even habits which are contrary to the virtue of faith or other virtues, paralyse rather than amputate the members of the mystical Body.

Besides the primary bond,—the sacramental character,—there are, he continues, other ties by which the Body of Christ is *more completely* unified. Of these the chief is the social bond of juridical subjection to the hierarchy and to the Roman Pontiff. It is the clearly expressed wish of Christ that all who, by baptism, become members of His mystical Body, should form together a single external society in subjection to the successor of St. Peter. The Church, as an undivided society, should be coextensive with the mystical union of Christians based upon the sacramental character.

But although it is true that he who refuses to commune with the centre of visible unity is entirely outside the Church, regarded as a social unit, he is yet a member of the mystical Body in virtue of the original and enduring bond of baptism. Hence it is untrue to state absolutely that any baptized person has ceased or can cease, during life, to be a member of the Church of Christ.

This distinction between the Church as social Body and the same as mystical Body, he concludes, enables us to hold that the Orientals, though under the social aspect separated from us, are nevertheless incorporated in the mystical Body ; and that under this aspect they are members of the Church and our brothers in Christ. Moreover, he adds, Easterns differ from Protestants in this that in virtue of the episcopal and sacerdotal character they have retained their apostolicity and enter into the mystical Body *not as separated cells* but as *organized members*. When there is question of Orientals, therefore, we can speak of a union of churches, and not merely of a restoration of erring individuals.¹

¹ He quotes the celebrated Russian philosopher, Solov'ev, "who had a most clear insight into the essence of the Church of Christ," to the effect that any attempt at union of East and West will be vain until we recognize the essential, the mystico-sacramental solidarity of the churches as inseparable parts of the Body of Christ. Recognizing this, he says, we should strive to make this essential unity external and visible by a social union of those great communities which historical happenings have divided, but which continue to be one in Christ (*Acta*, p. 25).

CRITICISM

Schismatical Churches.—In regarding all baptized persons as members of the body of Christ M. Urban simply follows St. Paul: "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free."¹ But he holds further that the Oriental Church, though separated, has retained its apostolicity since its Orders are valid. This cannot be conceded. The Eastern hierarchy is not apostolic. In breaking with Rome they have broken with the Twelve, and the validity of their Orders is no guarantee of the apostolicity of their organization. M. Urban confounds authority (jurisdiction) with the power of Orders.

His view that the Oriental Church, unlike the Anglican, has retained its organization and hence can be restored *as a church* is interesting. Personally we do not admit it. We hold, on the contrary, that any church which becomes schismatical *eo ipso* becomes really separate *as an organization* and ceases to exist as such, the individuals composing it remaining (outlawed) members of the one true Church. But M. Urban's view is not, we think, quite impossible of acceptance by Catholics. Antecedently to the schism the Oriental limb of the mystical Body was endowed with an organization

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

which enabled it to act in a *corporate* capacity as a channel of grace. Now it may be that by schism the limb in question became, not amputated, but just paralyzed; it may be, also, that it has not become a mere mass of discrete cells, but has retained its organization, so that it would not require to be organized anew in the event of restoration. This, we believe, may be argued; but, though we were to grant that the Eastern Church is to-day *really a church*, we should not grant that, *as such, it is capable of corporate activity*. If it be a limb of Christ's Body it is a paralyzed limb.¹

Individual Schismatics.—We have yet to inquire if *individual* schismatics are outside the Church, considered merely as an external society ruled by the Catholic episcopacy in subjection to the Vicar of Christ. Here M. Urban is quite explicit: "If the social nature of the Church is alone considered," he says, "we readily grant that the opinion of Bellarmine (who unchurches schismatics) is absolutely true. . . . He who does

¹ We have found no sufficient evidence to show that the Roman Church has ever officially recognized that the Eastern Church *as a church* is possessed of any jurisdiction whatever ordinary or delegated for either forum. Eastern priests, it is true, validly absolve penitents who are in danger of death and bless the Holy Oils; but the jurisdiction necessary in such cases may be derived by the individual minister immediately from the Holy See, and not from his own Church—if it be a church.

not subject himself to the centre of unity may be said to be entirely outside the Church.”¹

But we doubt if the contention can be sustained. M. Urban himself will admit that schismatics are bound by the laws of the Church. How then can it be “absolutely true” that they are quite outside her pale. No one is bound to obey the voice of authority save a subject.

Conclusion.—Secession from a temporal kingdom is sometimes lawful and sometimes successful. When successful, those who have broken away cease to be subject to the mother-state; and this, even though it should happen that the secession was originally unjustifiable. A citizen of the United States owes no allegiance to-day to the King of England, even though there were no sufficient reason for the American War of Independence. Any secession which is made good nullifies the act of initiation whereby men become citizens and subjects of a temporal State.

Not so in the spiritual kingdom. Here secession is never lawful and can never be successful: We can never make good a break with the Church of Christ. Schismatics may be convinced that separation from the Mother-Church is not only lawful but obligatory: many of the sixteenth-century Reformers professed to think so; that seceders may set up a new flag, and utterly re-

¹ *Acta*, pp. 22, 24-25.

pudiate the old, so constituting in the eyes of men generally a new and perfectly autonomous organization. It matters not; the old flag still claims their allegiance.¹ The original act of initiation whereby they become citizens of the Kingdom, cannot be nullified. In this respect the analogy between Church and State breaks down. Schism is ever abortive, as it is ever inexcusable.

¹ “ *Cum* (status acatholicus) *est Christianus* per se loquendo *Ecclesia* habet erga eum omnia iura sua; etenim eius *rebellio* eum *non liberat a suis oneribus nec minuit Ecclesiae iura* ” (Cavagnis: *Institutiones Iuris Publici Ecclesiastici*: vol. i, n. 563).

APPENDIX A

Independent and Democratic Theories of Church Polity

Congregationalism.—Congregationalists concede that ecclesiasticism is fundamental in the Gospel, but refuse to admit that any particular form of church government is of universal and permanent obligation. Christ, they hold, did not concern Himself with external forms. He intended, of course, that His teaching should realize itself in a dispersion of churches, but the form of government in each He left to be determined entirely by the local community. Congregationalism holds strongly for the absolute independence of the local church and for the elective character of the ministry.

The text Matt. xviii. 20¹ is advanced as the charter of Independency.² "Congregational Independency" writes Dr. Dale "affirms the enduring truth of the words: 'wherever two or three are gathered together in My name there am I

¹ "Where there are two or three gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of them."

² When they first "dissented" Congregationalists were known as "Independents."

in the midst of them.’¹ . . . These great words of Christ are the real ground and justification of the independent form of church polity. They say that when two or three are gathered together in His name He is in the assembly . . . to invest its action with His own authority. What they bind on earth is bound in heaven, what they loose on earth, is loosed in heaven. . . . From an assembly in which Christ Himself is present and whose decisions He confirms there can be no appeal. . . . His authority cannot be challenged. . . .

. . . “The Church” the writer continues “is the organ of Christ’s will² in deciding in cases of doctrine³ and of discipline, in receiving members, in electing and deposing its officers, and in regulating its worship.⁴ When two or three are gathered together in His name He is one of the company; their decisions are His.”⁵

All this runs so engagingly that it seems almost unkind to raise difficulties. But we can scarcely help inquiring if *every* Christian assembly” constitutes an organ of Christ’s will. Dr. Dale’s reply is interesting, but not a little perplexing. “A church” he explains “speaks and acts with Christ’s authority only in so far as its members are

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 76.

² *op. cit.*, p. 75.

³ *ib.*, p. 30.

⁴ *ib.*, pp. 74, 75; *cfr.*, p. 63.

⁵ *ib.*

gathered together in His name. Those who have no faith in Him, no love for Him, to whom He is not the Son of God and the Saviour of the world are not gathered together in His name. If such persons are present in the assembly, then *to whatever extent their judgment and action control the Church to that same extent . . . they divide the members from Christ and prevent them from being gathered together in His name. The power and authority of the Church is thus diminished, and if such persons are sufficiently numerous to determine the action of the Church, this power must disappear altogether.*"¹ We refrain from comment.

The problem of church polity is readily solved on Congregational principles: From the Acts of the apostles and in the apostolic epistles, we are told, it is possible to discover the general outlines of the organization of the first churches; but there is no precept by which this organization is enforced on the churches of all countries and of all times.² Apostolic precedent is not a formal law. "We have to distinguish between what was essential and what was accidental, between what was permanent and what was temporary, both in apostolic action and in apostolic precept."³ Christ is the Supreme ruler in every church. His will concerning the constitution and administration of the Church is

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 42, 43.

² *op. cit.*, p. 4.

³ *ib.*, p. 40.

therefore to be carried out. We learn His will in these matters by allowing ourselves to be guided not so much by Sacred Scripture as "by the characteristic spirit of the Christian revelation."¹ The Church of Christ is not under the bondage of the "letter;" it has the freedom of the Spirit.²

Office-bearers in apostolic times, it is contended, were in all cases elected and deposed by the community; and every church was independent of every other church and governed itself without the interference of any external ecclesiastical authority.³ "There is not a single case in the New Testament in which any Christian assembly acknowledges or is required to acknowledge any ecclesiastical authority external to itself."⁴ The apostolic churches were free from even apostolic control. Paul could only *tell* the Church of Corinth *what was the will of Christ*.⁵ "With a courage, with an audacity of faith, which, when we look back upon it, creates astonishment, the apostles trusted every Christian society which they founded to itself."⁶

In all this Dr. Dale, guided, of course, by "the characteristic spirit," finds something that is essential and permanent in apostolic action. The modern Church, like every society, must have regularly appointed officers.⁷ "Christians who live near each other," he writes, "should worship

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 34 *sqq.*

² *ib.*

³ *ib.*, p. 7.

⁴ *op. cit.*, p. 69.

⁵ *ib.*, p. 71.

⁶ *ib.*, p. 73.

⁷ *ib.*, p. 51.

and pray together . . . and should ask some of their number to teach and to watch over them.”¹ *Having set up its office-bearers,*² *however, the community remains directly responsible to Christ for the maintenance of His authority in the Church.* “They must not only elect officers but regulate their own worship and determine what persons shall be received into their fellowship and what persons shall be excluded from it. Hence the Church must not be too large for all its members to meet regularly to fulfil the trust they have received from Christ.”³ . . .

Such in its main outlines is the Congregational polity as set forth by Dr. Dale. The fundamental principles of Independency were first formulated in the celebrated “Savoy Declaration” drawn up in 1658 by “elders and messengers” from the congregational churches. The Declaration holds rigidly for *absolute* independence of the local church. It states that “in case of difficulties or differences either in point of doctrine or administration, wherein either the churches in general are concerned or any one church . . . it is according to the mind of Christ that many churches . . . do meet in Synod or Council to consider and give their

¹*op.cit.* p. 26. The congregational ministry comprises pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons, “all chosen by the common suffrage of the church itself (with imposition of hands of the eldership of that church if there be any before constituted therein) and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer” (*Savoy Declaration*).

advice in or about that matter in difference to be reported to all the churches concerned: *Howbeit* these synods so assembled are not entrusted with any ecclesiastical power properly so-called, or with any jurisdiction . . . to impose their determination on the churches or officers." *Theoretically*, therefore, the Congregational denomination is *essentially inorganic*. Each church constitutes a separate unit, independent and isolated.¹

Presbyterian Independency.—Congregationalism is not the only form of Independency. A community of Christians may possess an elective ministry and assert its absolute freedom from external control,² and yet be far removed from Congregationalism. It is of the essence of the latter polity that the commonalty of the Church determine finally all questions relating to faith, external government, worship and administration. Having elected their ministry the faithful remain *directly* responsible to Christ for maintaining His authority in matters of doctrine and discipline.³ If, however, the community *delegates its responsibilities* to its elected officers *reserving to itself no power to revise their decisions authoritatively* it ceases to be a congregational church. It is directly

¹ *cfr. Cath. Ency.*, vol. iv, pp. 239 *sqq.*

² Civil no less than ecclesiastical. A congregational community professes to acknowledge "no head, priest, prophet or king save Christ."

³ Dale : *op. cit.*, p. 62.

responsible to Christ only for the election of ministers. Such a polity is described by Dr. Dale as "Presbyterian Independency."¹

Presbyterianism.—Presbyterianism is a form of polity which maintains a democratic theory of church government and yet is properly speaking neither Congregational nor Independent. Holding a well defined middle position between Independency and "Prelacy," it is avowedly opposed to both. The denomination is *organized*; and all government is by elective bodies corporate.²

The local congregation is ruled by the Session, churches within a limited area by the Presbytery, those within a more extended area by the Synod. The General Assembly constitutes a Supreme Court. The Session consists of a council of ruling elders presided over by a pastor who is elected by the commonalty. His election, however, must be ratified by the Presbytery. The elders are elected absolutely.³ It is to be noted that Presbyterians while holding that their system of government is truest to Scriptural principles do not contend that Christians become unchurched by the adoption of a different polity.⁴

All ecclesiastical authority has been directly placed in the hands of the entire membership, and

¹ Dale, pp. 76, 77.

² "Presbyterianism might be more appropriately named the *conciliar system* of church government": Lindsay, *op. cit.* p. 198.

³ *cfr. Cath. Ency.*, vol. xii, pp. 392 *sqq.*

⁴ Lindsay: *op. cit.*, introd., p. ix.

not in the hands of office-bearers.¹ This authority is delegated to a representative ministry by the faithful. Its source, however, is the presence of Christ promised and bestowed upon His people and diffused through the membership of the churches. The ministerial "character" is therefore conferred "from above."² The Church is at once democratic and theocratic.³

The Church is sacerdotal. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is a priest. The faithful may select some from among them to be their *ministers* and thus set up a *ministering* priesthood; but there can be no *mediating* priesthood within the Christian society. "There is one Mediator only, and all, men, women, and children, have the promise of immediate entrance into the presence of God and are priests."⁴ . . . The conception of a mutilated sacerdotalism . . . did

¹ Lindsay : *op. cit.*, p. 30.

² The stress laid by Dr. Lindsay on this obvious point is quite uncalled for (*op. cit.*, pp. 25, 33, introd., p. ix). He tilts at windmills, arguing as if Presbyterianism and other democratic forms of polity were condemned by us solely on the ground that a ministerial character conferred by the membership is, *of necessity*, "from below." It is a mistaken idea. We have no difficulty whatever in conceding that a ministry delegated by the faithful would be "from above," if such were Christ's positive arrangement. We contend simply that as a matter of fact such was not the arrangement. We do not discuss what is true or false 'of necessity.' The question is one of fact.

³ *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁴ Lindsay : *op. cit.*, p. 35.

not appear until the time of Cyprian and was his invention.¹ Martyrdom, fasting that we may have food to give to the hungry, prayers, thanksgivings, almsgiving, church services, and especially the Holy Supper, all these are Christian sacrifice—the sacrifice of self.²

¹ Lindsay, p. 37 n.

² *ib.*, p. 36.

APPENDIX B

Protestantism and Visible Unity.—The externalization of the inner life of the Spirit which makes Christianity a fraternity—an ἀδελφότης, is the sole principle of visible unity conceded by Dr. Lindsay to the Church Universal. “Paul,” he writes, “bent his whole energies to break down the false principle of continuity which placed the succession in something external, and not in the possession and transmission from generation to generation of the gifts of the Spirit. This done, he used his administrative powers, and they were those of a statesman, to create channels for the flow of the manifestation of the visible unity of the Church of Christ.”

“His ruling thought,” Dr. Lindsay continues, “was to provide that all the various Christian communities should manifest their real brotherhood in the cultivation of the ‘fruits of the Spirit.’ The method of carving out a visibly universal church by means of regulations affecting organization and external form is not without its attractions, which are irresistible to minds of the lawyer type and training such as we see afterwards in Cyprian of Carthage. It seems a short and easy

method of showing that the whole Church is visibly one. But it was not Paul's method. He seems to have thought as little about the special 'construction of sheep-folds' as his Master. He nowhere prescribed a universal ecclesiastical polity, still less did he teach that the universality of the Christian brotherhood should be made visible in this way. He regarded all the separate churches of Christ as independent self-governing societies. He strove to implant in all of them the principle of brotherly dealing with one another, and he dug channels in which the streams of the Spirit might flow in the practical manifestation of Christian fellowship."¹

Dr. Lindsay suggests a few forms of this "practical manifestation." Christians, wherever resident, should assist their indigent fellow-Christians in other parts. They should be hospitable towards travelling brethren, maintain a regular inter-ecclesiastical correspondence, and in general externalize the fruits of the Spirit. An all-round love of one another, and a visible manifestation of this love—*voilà tout*.

¹ Lindsay : *op. cit.*, pp. 20 *sqq.*

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